

EXPLORING THE ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN RACIAL IDENTITY ATTITUDES AND
SOCIAL JUSTICE OUTCOMES IN AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS: A
MIXED METHODS INVESTIGATION

BY

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DISSERTATION

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Abstract

Recent quantitative research provides empirical support for the relation between racial identity attitudes and a range of sociocultural and psychological outcomes; however, there is a paucity of research examining these associations using qualitative and mixed methods approaches (Lyons, Bike, Johnson, & Bethea, 2012). Using an integrated, sequential, explanatory mixed methods design, the present study employed cluster analysis and online interviewing methods to examine the relation between patterns of racial identity attitudes and sociopolitical engagement in a sample of 219 Black American college students. Racial identity attitudes were operationalized using the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS; Vandiver, Cross, Fhagen-Smith, Worrell, Swim, & Caldwell, 2000; Worrell, Vandiver, & Cross, 2004), and the sociopolitical engagement outcomes assessed included participants' views on effectiveness and extent of use of strategies for reducing racism, and participants' willingness to engage in social action. Results from the k-means cluster analysis indicated a six-cluster solution (*Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement, Multiculturalist/Miseducated, Assimilated, Low-Salience/Unaware, Identity in Transition/Immersion, and Identity in Transition/Self-Hatred*) that is consistent with cluster patterns identified in previous research. In addition, differential associations between cluster groups and activist orientation were found, where participants in the *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* cluster reported a higher degree of willingness to engage in social action, while those in the *Low-Salience/Unaware* cluster group reported the lowest levels. A sub-sample of students ($n = 5$) from the *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* cluster were interviewed regarding their racial identity narratives and their understanding of and involvement with sociopolitical issues; the sub-sample was purposefully selected based on findings from the extant literature (Watts, 1992; Lott, 2008). Three broad thematic categories emerged related to

students' understanding of their Blackness and engagement with racial injustice: *Environment and early awareness of race and injustice*, *Defining Blackness*, and *Means to dismantling institutional oppression*. Thematic findings were then integrated with quantitative results to explore convergence and divergence of mixed methods findings. Mixed methods analyses revealed that these themes were consistent with quantitative findings, in that students who identified race as a salient identity also identified conventional strategies for engaging in social activism to address institutional forms of injustice. The implications for these findings on future research are discussed.

To mom, dad, and Valentine – my most influential teachers

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~Audre Lorde, 1982

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the early 1950s Frantz Fanon (1952), a Black Martinican psychiatrist and author of the groundbreaking book *Black Skin, White Masks*, wrote, “the black experience is ambiguous, for there is not *one* Negro – there are *many* black [people]” (p. 115). Fanon’s statement is reflective of a longstanding desire in the social sciences to understand the complexities of personal and social identity, particularly for Black individuals living in the United States. Over the past three decades, Black racial identity theory in its various incarnations has become “one of the most frequently researched and debated topics” in the psychology literature to date (Cokley & Chapman, 2009, p. 283). Although there are a number of competing models and definitions, Black racial identity in general refers to the process of acquiring an understanding of one’s racial self-concept and the adoption of a positive racial group orientation in a racially stratified society (Cokley, 2007; Cross, 1991; Cross, 1995). Research findings suggest that Black racial identity attitudes are associated with a number of psychological indices including self-esteem, psychological well-being and distress, academic self-efficacy, counselor preference, and ethnic identity (see Cokley & Chapman, 2009 for a review).

William Cross’ work on racial identity is among the most widely cited of its kind in the psychology literature. Cross published his original Nigrescence or *Negro-to-Black conversion* theory in 1971, on the coattails of the Black Power Movement; twenty years later he reconceptualized the theory to account for contextual changes in society. The expanded Nigrescence theory (NT-E) re-envisioned Black identity as a complex process, comprised of a series of changes in a person’s attitude about his or her racial identity, as well as attitudes about one’s racial group orientation (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002; Worrell, Vandiver, Cross, & Fhagen-Smith, 2004; Worrell, Vandiver, Schaefer, Cross, & Fhagen-Smith,

2006). The NT-E consists of four racial identity phases, each with a separate set of embedded attitudes: pre-encounter (assimilation, self-hatred, and miseducation); encounter (which is viewed as an event or series of experiences that serve as the impetus for the possible “reevaluation” of one’s racial identity attitudes); immersion-emersion (intense Black involvement and anti-White); and internalization (Black nationalist, biculturalist, and multiculturalist) (Vandiver et al., 2002; Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokley, Cross, & Worrell, 2001, p. 183).

Cross’ work with a number of colleagues on the operationalization of the NT-E resulted in the creation of a psychometrically sound measure, the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS; Vandiver, Cross, Fhagen-Smith, Worrell, Swim, & Caldwell, 2000). Researchers have amassed a solid body of research providing empirical support for the CRIS as an appropriate measure of the NT-E. Support for the reliability and validity of the measure has been found through use of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (Worrell, 2008; Worrell & Watson, 2008), Item Response Models and Classical Test Theory scores (Sussman, Beaujean, Worrell, & Watson, 2012), and convergence with other well-known measures of racial identity (Vandiver et al., 2002).

Recent research has not only found psychometric support for the CRIS, but has found that racial identity is related to a range of psychological (Neville & Lilly, 2000; Telesford, Mendoza-Denton, & Worrell, 2013), cultural (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, 2012) behavioral (Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous, & Zimmerman, 2004), and educational (Awad, 2007) outcomes in theoretically consistent ways. In keeping with recommendations in the literature, recent studies (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver; Telesford et al.; Whittaker & Neville, 2010; Worrell et al., 2006) have used multivariate analyses such as cluster analysis to identify

and replicate consistent patterns in racial identity attitude scores. For example, Whittaker and Neville (2010) found a five-cluster solution consistent with those found in the extant literature, with clusters reflecting greater internalization of racial identity attitudes related to psychological well-being outcomes, and clusters reflecting immersion-emersion attitudes related to greater psychological distress. Similar findings were also reported in a study conducted by Teleford and his colleagues (2013) where the researchers identified a six-cluster solution, with certain internalization themed clusters (i.e., multiculturalist cluster) related to lower levels of psychological distress.

Black racial identity, and Nigrescence theory in particular, finds its theoretical roots in examining the process of psychological liberation from oppression. Within the African American community there has been a long tradition of community engagement, and this tradition has been examined across a range of disciplines. Black Psychologists, as well as psychologists and scholars from other disciplines that work closely with marginalized individuals around social justice and advocacy issues, recognize the importance of developing a clearer understanding of the psychological factors that contribute to sociopolitical engagement, and the ways in which individuals of African descent can cultivate a sense of empowerment in dismantling oppressive social forces such as racism (Utsey et al., 2001). This scholarly work has important implications for the connection between racial identity and sociopolitical engagement (Cross, 1971).

Although researchers have grappled with the nature of the relation between racial identity and sociopolitical engagement as a potentially relevant outcome, most of the studies examining this association predated the development of the CRIS (e.g., Lott, 2008; Watts, 1992). In general, sociopolitical outcomes reflect the process of resisting oppression and promoting political and social thought and action. Watts (1992) examined the link between racial identity and strategies

for reducing racism, as a sociopolitical outcome. He found that individuals with strong immersion and internalized racial identity attitudes were more likely to support activist strategies for reducing racism, such as mobilizing African Americans and picketing. Conversely, individuals with pre-encounter racial identity attitudes were more likely to endorse personal efforts to reduce racism, such as integrating with Whites and persuasion techniques to reduce racism. This line of research is consistent with recent recommendations encouraging psychologists in general, and specifically counseling psychologists, to move towards engaging in research and practice that reflects an emphasis on social justice and social advocacy (Corning & Myers, 2002; Goodman, Liang, Helms, Latta, Sparks, & Weintraub, 2004; Vera & Speight, 2003; Watts, 2004). Additionally, research of this kind builds on a main tenet of counseling psychology, which promotes the awareness, understanding and appreciation of multicultural competency and diversity in education, training, and mental health treatment (Fouad, Gerstein, & Toporek, 2006).

Psychologists have also encouraged diversity in the use of research designs and methodologies to better understand constructs such as racial identity (Lyons et al., 2012; Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007). For example, Cross asserted “mixed methods research may hold the most potential for moving the discourse on Black identity and ethnic identity to a higher level of analysis” (Cross, 2005, p. 180). Despite this scholarly support, there is a paucity of research examining Black racial identity from diverse methodological approaches, and in particular a mixed methods approach. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003) defined mixed methods research studies as those using “qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques in either parallel or sequential phases, [where the] mixing occurs in the methods section of the study” (p. 11).

Mixed methods research is viewed as being especially valuable to social science inquiry because of its utility with respect to providing a “better understanding [of] social phenomena, which are inherently complex and contextual” (Greene, 2007, p. 14). The process of mixing methods within a research study allows for the presentation of diverse viewpoints and perspectives, and can also provide support for a concept or phenomena through the convergence of both quantitative and qualitative data (Teddle & Tashakkori). Furthermore, mixed methods approaches, in certain instances, can be social justice oriented in their focus on the “emancipatory, antidiscriminatory, participatory, and the like” in examining the “lives and experiences of marginalized persons or groups” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p. 123). In sum, mixed methods research, by using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and analyses, provides better opportunities to answer research questions that cannot be sufficiently answered by one method alone, thereby strengthening the inferences set forth in a study (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). Additionally, mixed methods approaches are congruent with the aims of Counseling Psychology and Black Psychology, in its attempts to honor and give voice to the complex sociocultural experiences of people of African descent (Lyons et al., 2012).

The present study used an integrated, sequential explanatory mixed methods design to understand the relation between patterns of racial identity attitudes and strategies for addressing racism. According to Creswell and colleagues (2003), mixed methods integrated, sequential, explanatory design is characterized by the collection and analysis of quantitative data, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data, which is then used to elaborate on the quantitative data in the first phase of the study; the findings from the two phases are then The goal of this research was three-fold: first, to obtain support for the patterns of racial identity

attitudes identified in the extant literature; second, to obtain support for the relation between racial identity attitudes, individuals' engagement in social action, and specifically individuals' strategies for addressing racism; and third, to obtain a deeper understanding of the link between individuals' attitudes about their race and their willingness to engage in anti-racist thinking and action, as a form of activism. Cross' expanded Nigrescence theory (NT-E) served as the theoretical framework for this project, in light of its substantial empirical support in the extant research literature, and its emphasis on the "process of how an individual's racial identity changes over time", as described by Cokley and Chapman (2009, p. 287).

"Mixing" occurred at the levels of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Quantitative data were collected using survey methodology, in order to maintain consistency with the research conducted on Black racial identity, and cluster analysis, a quantitative analytical approach, was used to obtain support for the utility of the CRIS and the replicability and generalizability of racial identity attitude patterns. Qualitative data were subsequently collected via online interviews, in order to provide a more complex and nuanced understanding of the relations between the variables in the study, and to offer a narrative that accompanies participants' survey responses. Ultimately, this study sought to answer the following research questions: (1) Did cluster analyses for this investigation reveal patterns of racial identity attitudes that are consistent with the expanded Nigrescence theory and previous empirical research (Whittaker & Neville, 2010; Worrell et al., 2006)? (2) Did differential associations exist between racial identity attitude patterns and sociopolitical outcomes, specifically strategies used to address racism and promote social action? (3) If differences were found between racial identity attitude patterns, what are the ways in which participants engage in social activism, especially within the internalization cluster group(s)?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Social scientists across a variety of disciplines have explored the role that social identities such as race play in shaping the self-concept of individuals from marginalized groups. Over the past 42 years, psychologists have sought to improve upon their understanding of Black racial identity attitudes, in part by investigating psychological well-being and distress correlates and more recently social justice correlates such as civic engagement, social action, and sociopolitical development (Diemer, Kauffman, Koenig, Trahan, & Hsieh, 2006; Lott, 2008; Watts, 1992). In this chapter, I review the literature exploring Black racial identity and sociopolitical development. First, I present an overview of the historical context of racial identity of Black Americans. Second, I discuss conceptualizations of Black racial identity, with an emphasis on Cross' theory of Nigrescence, and how these conceptualizations led to examinations of Black racial identity attitudes in the quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research literature. I conclude with a brief discussion of sociopolitical development and its relation to racial identity.

Contextualizing Black Racial Identity

The psychological study of Black racial identity has its roots in the writings of a number of well-known scholars of African descent, such as Aime Cesaire', Frantz Fanon, and Carter G. Woodson (Cokley & Chapman, 2009); however, the concept of Black racial identity among people of African descent in the United States is often traced to W.E.B. DuBois (1903) and his seminal sociological text, *The Souls of Black Folks*. DuBois suggested that Black people in the United States experience *double consciousness*, the internal psychological struggle of being both "American [and] a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body" (p. 3). DuBois' concept of double consciousness lays the foundation for

understanding how Black individuals living in the U.S. shape their self-concept and their group identity around race.

Frantz Fanon, a Martinican psychiatrist and scholar, also wrote extensively on the psychological and racial experiences of people of African descent and much of his work converges with DuBois' writings on Black psychological and existential conflict (Thompson & Alfred, 2009). Fanon's writings stemmed from his study of philosophy and anthropology, and his personal reflections on his psychotherapy with both the colonizer and the colonized in Africa. His analysis incorporated an acknowledgement of issues such as social inequality, racism and liberation. In his book *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon (1952) argued that the psychological concerns that Black people have experienced are the result of being subjected to a long history of racism and oppression due to colonization. Fanon's analysis of oppression and liberation, and its effects on the psyche of people of African descent informed a number of social and political movements in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, as well as the writings of American psychologists interested in examining the attitudes, behaviors, and self-concepts of Blacks in the United States.

Black Liberation Psychology (BLP), which finds its roots in the writings of the aforementioned scholars, concerns itself with the belief that people of African descent (along with individuals from other marginalized backgrounds) are subject to a range of overt and covert forms of oppression and injustice at the individual, intergroup, and institutional level (Moane, 2003; Thompson & Alfred, 2009). In addition to understanding the effects of oppression on Black people throughout the world, there is a separate but related focus on promoting resistance to oppression through collective action, self-determination, and empowerment. In their chapter outlining "a Psychology of Liberation from a Fanonian Perspective", Utsey, Bolden, and Brown

(2001) highlighted the utility of self-determination in the psychological liberation of African Americans, and specifically the importance of the “process of identifying and defining the self through an internal, historical lens” (p. 327) as a first step to counteracting oppression.

BLP shares a common foundation with racial identity theory in its efforts to understand how racially oppressive forces --particularly white supremacy, racism, and colonialism -- affect the mental, emotional, and behavioral functioning of people of African descent (Thompson & Alfred, 2009). One of the primary goals of BLP is to re-appropriate the oppressed group’s sense of self and encourage emancipation by building critical consciousness around issues of social injustice (Utsey et al., 2001; Watts, Abdul-Adil, & Pratt, 2002). Contemporary psychologists engaged with this work encourage the cultivation of self-knowledge and awareness at the individual level (e.g., racial identity) as a way to build consciousness of contextual, social, and organizational factors that may contribute to racial oppression (Thompson & Alfred; Utsey, Bolden, & Brown). Watts, Williams, and Jaegers (2003), for example, suggested that internalizing a strong, positive racial identity is instrumental in aiding Black individuals to work towards dismantling racism and facilitate healing as a community.

Conceptualizing Racial Identity in Black Americans

Cross’ theory of Nigrescence. A number of models examining racial identity attitudes were created in response to the writings of revolutionary scholars and the sociopolitical movements occurring during the late 1960s and into 1970s. William Cross’ Nigrescence theory emerged as one of the more well-known and widely referenced of these racial identity theories in psychology (Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1998; Cokley & Chapman, 2009). Originally called the *Negro-to-Black conversion experience*, Cross (1971) drew from Fanon’s perspectives on “psychological liberation under conditions of oppression”, and how this informed the

development of one's Black identity (p. 14). Cross' theory was initially conceived as a developmental model organized into five distinct identity stages: (1) pre-encounter, which represents the internalization of mainstream, or pro-White/anti-Black attitudes towards one's race; (2) encounter, characterized by the experiencing of a specific event or series of events that result in the individual questioning his or her race-related beliefs; (3) immersion-emersion, which is represented initially by the acquisition of a strong pro-Black and anti-White identity, and later by the abandonment of anti-White attitudes; (4) internalization stage, which involves the integration of a positive Black identity; and (5) internalization-commitment, which builds on the previous stage by including individuals who become committed to activism and the promotion of social change.

Two decades after the first appearance of Nigrescence theory in *Black World*, Cross (1991) revised his theory to reflect his current thinking about Black racial identity given the changes in the political climate and to address the criticism about the operationalization of pre-encounter attitudes (Cokley & Chapman, 2009; Vandiver, 2001). The subsequent revised Nigrescence Theory (NT-R), suggested a more nuanced view of the pre-encounter identities, and introduced the concept of *race salience*, which "refers to the importance or significance of race in a person's approach to life" (Vandiver, 2001, p. 168). In the current model, the pre-encounter stage is characterized by three identity themes: assimilation, which is reflected by low race salience, or a low degree of importance with regards to race; self-hatred, which is reflected by self-hatred of one's Black identity; and miseducation, which is reflected by the belief in and internalization of negative or stereotypical images about Blacks (e.g., "lazy, criminal, or unintelligent") (Vandiver, 2001, p. 168). The encounter theme, although relatively unchanged in the expanded Nigrescence theory, is not as easily categorized in comparison to the other stages,

as it represents a less defined period in the development of racial identity attitudes among individuals. Although the concept of *encounter* is still present in the expanded theory, it is not operationalized because it is viewed as an event or series of experiences that serve as the impetus for the possible reexamination of one's racial identity (Vandiver et al., 2002).

Immersion-emersion was revised to include two identity themes: Intense Black Involvement, which represents the practice of immersing oneself in and engaging with Black culture and all things Black, and Anti-White, which represents the practice of rejecting Whites and mainstream culture. The internalization stage combined the final two stages from the original Nigrescence theory, and is now represented by three identities: Afrocentric or Black nationalist, which emphasizes a pro-Black identity as salient, and reflects a dedication to activism in the Black community; Biculturalist, which views both the Black identity and the American identity as being salient, and Multiculturalist, which views multiple cultural group orientations as being salient with regards to identity (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, 2012; Cross, 1991; Vandiver, 2001; Vandiver et al., 2002; Worrell et al., 2004).

Empirical support for Cross' racial identity models. There is substantial support for Cross' Nigrescence theory (in its various forms), as evidenced by the development of a number of measures over the past thirty years. The Black Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (RIAS; Parham & Helms, 1981) was derived from Cross' (1971) original Nigrescence theory. The scale is designed to measure racial identity as constituting continuous racial identity attitudes, rather than discrete stages. Researchers have used the RIAS-B to explore relations between racial identity and psychological outcomes among Black Americans (Neville & Lilly, 2000; Vandiver et al., 2002). Although the RIAS-B continues to be used in psychological research, scholars have expressed concern about the limited psychometric support of the scale (Cokley, 2007). More

recently, researchers have created a new measure to capture the changes incorporated in the expanded Nigrescence theory (Vandiver et al., 2001; Worrell et al., 2004).

Cross and his colleagues developed the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS; Vandiver et al., 2000; Worrell, Vandiver, & Cross, 2004) to assess the expanded Nigrescence theory. The CRIS has solid psychometric support as a reliable and valid measure of racial identity across developmental periods, specifically with adolescents, emerging adults, and adults (Vandiver et al., 2002; Worrell, 2008). In initial validation studies, support for the validity of the CRIS was found by conducting exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses; a six-factor model was found to best describe the data, which is consistent with the structure of the expanded Nigrescence theory (Vandiver et al., 2002). Later studies by Worrell (2008) and Worrell and Watson (2008) found additional support for a six-factor model in separate samples of adolescent, emerging adult/college student, and adult samples. In addition, support for the convergent validity of the CRIS was demonstrated with “theoretically consistent correlations” with the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity, another widely used racial identity measure (Cokley, 2007, p. 231).

Nigrescence attitudes and cluster analysis. At the recommendation of Vandiver and colleagues (2002), support has also been found for the generalizability and consistency of patterns of racial identity attitude scores using multivariate procedures. Researchers have used procedures such as canonical correlation (Worrell & Gardner-Kitt, 2006) and cluster analysis (Telesford et al., 2013; Whittaker & Neville, 2010), to obtain findings consistent with the theoretical structure of the expanded Nigrescence theory. Although empirical support has been found for the CRIS as a psychometrically sound measure of racial identity theory, researchers continue to call for studies that examine racial identity as a “meaningful predictor” of other psychological constructs (Worrell & Watson, 2008).

Nigrescence attitudes as a useful predictor of psychological well-being. Support has been found for the relation between racial identity and various psychological outcomes, including counselor preference (Ferguson, Leach, Levy, Nicholson, & Johnson, 2008; Helms & Carter, 1991; Townes, Chavez-Korell, & Cunningham, 2009), self-esteem (Awad, 2007; Rowley, Sellers, Chavous, & Smith, 1998), ethnic identity and enculturation (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, 2012; Cokley, 2005; Goodstein & Ponterotto, 1997), psychological health (Pillay, 2005; Telesford et al., 2013; Whittaker & Neville, 2010), and perceptions of racism and discrimination (Banks & Kohn-Wood, 2007; Pieterse & Carter, 2010; Watts & Carter, 1991). Results from the literature indicated that greater positive internalization of one's racial identity is associated with better psychological adjustment and self-concept (Whittaker & Neville, 2010), as well as a greater ability to identify and cope with perceived discrimination and racism (Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zimmerman, 2003).

Findings from Whittaker and Neville's (2010) cluster analysis provide support for the consistency in patterns of racial identity attitudes, as well as the relation between these patterns of racial identity attitudes and psychological well-being among students attending either a predominantly White institution (PWI) or a historically Black college or university (HBCU). Individuals assigned to the Multiculturalist cluster, a group whose scores reflected greater internalization of Black racial identity attitudes, also reported the highest levels of global psychological well-being, satisfaction with life, and hardiness or resiliency. These findings were consistent with other studies exploring the association between racial identity and psychological well-being (e.g., Neville & Lilly, 2000). Neville and Lilly (2000) also found that individuals who have a positive, internalized sense of their Blackness were more likely to report lower levels of psychological distress compared to individuals who were less engaged and clear about their

racial identity. The latter assertion is also consistent with findings from other studies, which indicate that individuals who view race as being less important in their lives are more likely to report higher levels of psychological distress and perceive themselves as having less control over their health status (Pieterse & Carter, 2010; Pillay, 2005).

Chavez-Korell and Vandiver (2012) examined the association between racial identity attitudes, African American enculturation (i.e., the degree to which one subscribes to traditional African American cultural beliefs and practices; Cokley & Helm, 2007), and social distance (i.e., the degree of sympathetic understanding between African Americans and other social groups), and found support for a theoretically consistent six-cluster solution. The authors highlighted that four of the cluster solutions identified in their study were replicated in this sample and two new cluster patterns (*Self-Hating* and *Intense Black Involvement*) were identified, thereby providing empirical support for the consistency of racial identity attitude patterns in the African American community and extending our understanding of previously undetected racial identity attitudes. In addition to cluster analysis, a one-way ANOVA revealed a differential relationship between two clusters and the outcomes examined in the study. Specifically, individuals in the *Assimilated* cluster group endorsed lower levels of enculturation than individuals in the *Afrocentric* and *Intense Black Involvement* clusters, and individuals in the *Self-Hating* cluster group endorsed lower levels of enculturation than the *Afrocentric* cluster group. Additionally, a one-way MANOVA revealed that individuals in the *Assimilated* and *Self-Hating* clusters preferred less social distance from Whites, Jews, and Asians than individuals in the *Afrocentric*, *Intense Black Involvement* and *Immersion* cluster groups. These findings provide supporting evidence for the relation between Nigrescence attitudes and cultural and psychological outcomes, and for the range of potential cluster patterns reflecting a variety of Black racial identity attitudes.

Most recently, Telesford, Mendoza-Denton, and Worrell (2013) also found support for a theoretically consistent six-cluster solution in their investigation of the relation between racial identity attitudes, psychological distress, and personal and status-based rejection sensitivity (i.e., anxious expectations of personal and race-based rejection from significant others or from individuals in situations where discrimination is possible, respectively). The researchers found support for five clusters previously identified in the research literature (*Afrocentric*, *Assimilation*, *Low Race Salience*, *Negative Race Salience*, and *Multiculturalist*), and one new cluster (*Conflicted*). A one-way ANOVA also revealed that individuals in the *Conflicted* cluster reported comparatively higher levels of psychological distress than the five other clusters. Individuals in the *Conflicted* and *Negative Race Salience* cluster also reported meaningfully more race-based rejection sensitivity than individuals in the *Low Race Salience* cluster, and the *Conflicted* cluster also reported greater personal rejection sensitivity than participants in the *Multiculturalist*, *Low Race Salience*, and *Assimilated* clusters. Finally, individuals in the *Multiculturalist* cluster reported the lowest levels of personal rejection sensitivity from all other clusters except for *Low Race Salience*.

These findings, similar to Chavez-Korell and Vandiver (2012), also provide support for existing cluster solutions and new information about racial identity patterns not previously identified, which is valuable for broadening our understanding of how a range of Black individuals in America understand race. With the introduction of race-related and personal rejection sensitivity, as well as additional confirmation and nuanced information about the nature of the relation between higher levels of psychological distress in the *Conflicted* cluster (which the authors presume is due to the simultaneous endorsement of Assimilationist and Anti-White attitudes, rather than only Self-Hatred attitudes), this study also provides solid information about

the nuances in the association between racial identity attitude patterns and psychological functioning.

In sum, scholars have found support for the presence of six consistent cluster patterns identified across recent Nigrescence cluster analyses studies (*Multiculturalist, Immersion, Afrocentric, Assimilated, Negative Race Salience and Low Race Salience*), and have identified three new cluster patterns (*Intense Black Involvement, Self-Hatred, Conflicted*). Additionally, certain pre-encounter clusters have been found to be related to lower levels of enculturation and less endorsement of social distance from Whites, Jews, and Blacks (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, 2012). Both *Conflicted* and *Negative Race Salience* clusters were found to have higher levels of rejection sensitivity. Immersion and Internalized clusters have been found to be related to higher levels of enculturation, and in one study, the *Multiculturalist* cluster was found to be related to lower levels of personal rejection sensitivity and higher levels of psychological adjustment.

These studies provide a wealth of quantitative support for the replication of existing racial identity attitudes patterns and the identification of new cluster solutions. A next step in extending this area of research is to broaden our knowledge of psychological outcomes beyond those of psychological well-being, to include indicators of cultural and sociopolitical engagement. Cross' (1971) original Nigrescence theory was grounded in the concept of fostering liberation by dismantling psychological oppression, where internalization of a positive racial identity was reflected by engagement in activism within one's community. Although the theory has since been revised and expanded, revisiting phenomena that are aligned with its roots can have important implications for our understanding of the constancy of Nigrescence theory. Another important step in developing this area of study involves cultivating a more detailed understanding around the meaning of these cluster groups and related outcomes, using

qualitative methods to obtain narrative information about individuals' experiences around race. This form of inquiry will allow scholars to further complicate and inform our understanding of how African American individuals understand and think about their Blackness on an individual level, and with respect to their racial group.

Racial identity, qualitative, and mixed methods inquiry. Although the vast majority of empirical support on racial identity theory comes from researchers who adopt a quantitative approach in their investigations, there are a small number of studies that use qualitative or mixed methods practices to examine racial identity. For example, Tatum (2004) used a case study design to explore the racial identity processes of 18 middle-class Black college students raised in predominantly White communities. Tatum used Cross' original Nigrescence theory as a framework to discuss five participant profiles related to encounter experiences with race and the saliency of race in their lives. She uncovered factors influencing students' racial identity attitudes including socialization by family, friends, and the educational settings in the semi-structured individual interviews. Although, as a qualitative study, these findings are not meant to be generalizable to the experiences of most Black college students, the study provides rich descriptive information about the relation between racial identity and family and peer racial socialization as psychological outcomes.

Lyons, Bike, Johnson, and Bethea (2012) directly addressed the value of culturally competent qualitative research on the experiences of people of African descent. The authors suggest that this approach lends itself to obtaining a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of Black individuals and their communities, and is consistent with a number of African-centered values; however, the number and quality of qualitative studies currently in existence is low. Qualitative methods, according to Lyons and colleagues, are better able to

speak to and illuminate the person-environment interactions around race and culture, in a way that quantitative research cannot. Furthermore, the use of interviewing as a qualitative data collection strategy, allows for the illumination of “complex conversational and contextualized data . . . [and] reflections on the specific structure of reality . . . gleaned through ‘beingness’ with others in person-to-person interactions” (Lyons et al., 156). Lyons and her colleagues take the position that quantitative inquiry, on its own, is insufficient, and suggest that qualitative inquiry is important to flesh out African-descended epistemology (i.e., ways of knowing); however, there is no discussion about the potential utility of merging the two approaches as a means to more comprehensively understanding the psychological experiences of African Americans.

There are very few racial identity studies employing a mixed methods approach to examine the racialized experiences of people of color. In one of these rare studies, Charmaraman and Grossman (2010) used a mixed methods research design incorporating a grounded theory approach and Likert-style survey questions to explore the meanings that adolescents attach to their race, ethnic, and gender identifications. Findings from this racially diverse sample of high school students suggested that participants viewed their racial-ethnic identity as being an important part of their backgrounds. The qualitative themes provided a more complex and detailed discussion of gender differences in racial-ethnic identity centrality, which the researchers suggested were often overlooked in the literature. These findings provide promising support for the utility of a mixed methods approach in developing a more complex understanding of racial identity, and reflect a troubling gap in the extant literature. Research using only one set of methods (either quantitative or qualitative) has the potential to overlook important themes and trends in the racial identity attitudes of Black Americans, providing us with a limited picture of racial identity as well as with its correlates.

Although there is also a wealth of qualitative inquiry examining racial identity as a psychological phenomenon, there is comparatively, little information that seeks to merge qualitative and quantitative inquiry. Furthermore, most of the racial identity research among adults to date has sought to obtain quantitative support for a number of racial identity measures and scales, as well as for the relation between racial identity and a range of social outcomes. These findings collectively reveal that racial identity has the potential to influence factors such as psychological health, academic performance, and preferences for health providers. Additionally, researchers have theorized a connection between racial identity and other racial oppression-based constructs such as perceived racism and discrimination and strategies for reducing racism (Banks & Kohn-Wood, 2007; Jones, Cross, & DeFour, 2007; Pieterse & Carter, 2010; Watts, 1992); however, there is surprisingly little empirical research documenting these associations.

Sociopolitical Development

The extant research on racial identity theory, particularly as it relates to marginalized racial groups such as Black Americans, has readily engaged concepts associated with oppression and social action. As an area of study that addresses the presence of injustice as well as the ability to manage injustice, sociopolitical development speaks to much of the work that has been conducted on Black racial identity (Watts, 2004). In this section, I define sociopolitical development (also referred to in this paper as sociopolitical engagement) and discuss its relation to social, educational, and psychological outcomes in the research literature. I conclude with an exploration of the research that has examined the link between sociopolitical development and racial identity, and the limited research that used mixed methods inquiry to understand the association between sociopolitical development and race-related constructs.

Conceptualizing sociopolitical development. Sociopolitical development broadly refers to “the process of growth in a person’s knowledge, analytical skills, emotional faculties, and capacity for action in political and social systems; [it is] not limited to resisting oppression in the interest of justice, [but also includes] the capacity to envision and help create a just society” (Watts, Williams, & Jagers, 2003, p. 185). The process of confronting oppression in various forms is at the center of sociopolitical development. These forms of oppression consist of various types of violence including overt violence (i.e., tangible, hands-on, often physical forms of oppression) and subtle/ideological violence (i.e., psychological or emotional forms of oppression that are discounted as “non-existent” in American society) (Watts et al., 2003, p. 186). Sociopolitical development also addresses the ways in which individuals and groups promote liberation and social change. This aspect of sociopolitical development often focuses on the agency and activism that can motivate individuals or groups to produce change. This change can include reducing social and economic inequalities, building critical consciousness about the existence of oppression, and helping one’s own community or other social action groups to combat structural oppression (Diemer, Hsieh, & Pan, 2009). In these ways, promoting change within the context of sociopolitical development can be drastic or overt as well as subtle. Diemer et al. (2009) proposed a conceptual model that incorporates an exploration of self-definition, emphasizing self-concept as a part of one’s development of his or her sociopolitical attitudes and behaviors. This aspect of sociopolitical development could have particularly important implications for the study of racial identity, as a construct that is driven by the need to understand the formation of self-concept among Black Americans within an oppressive (i.e., racist) society (Cokley & Chapman, 2009).

Sociopolitical engagement and relevant outcomes. Although based primarily in the community psychology research literature, sociopolitical development has been broadly connected to a number of other disciplines, including education, sociology, communication, and political science. Scholars have connected sociopolitical development with a number of civic constructs, including community engagement and activism, volunteerism, social action and social capital, political identity, racial democratic beliefs, and citizenship development (Cote & Erickson, 2009; Sherrod, Flanagan, & Youniss, 2002; Spanierman, Neville, Liao, Heppner, & Wang, 2008; Stewart & McDermott, 2004). Recently, psychologists have begun to examine the relation between these sociopolitical development-based constructs and a number of educational and psychological outcomes, including vocational expectations, school and parental influences, and social injustices (Diemer, Hsieh, & Pan, 2009; Diemer, Kaufman, Koenig, Trahan, & Hsieh, 2006).

Diemer and Hsieh (2008) examined the role that sociopolitical development plays in addressing the gap between vocational aspirations (i.e., the job or career an individual could obtain in the ideal set of circumstances) and vocational expectations (i.e., the job or career that an individual believes he or she is likely to obtain in reality). The authors found that among a nationally representative sample of American youth of color from low socioeconomic status backgrounds, greater endorsement of sociopolitical development-related beliefs and actions, such as discussing social issues at home with one's family, engagement in social action organizations, and commitment to one's community, were found to reduce the vocational aspiration-expectation gap by promoting higher vocational expectations among minority youth. In addition to contributing to the literature on sociopolitical development and psychological outcomes relevant

to the study of counseling psychology, Diemer and Hsieh's study also reflects that sociopolitical development-based activities can have implications for the work of counseling psychologists.

Extending the field of counseling psychology through sociopolitical development.

Researchers have suggested that counseling psychologists engage more directly with research relating to sociopolitical development given the field's emphasis on the promotion of multiculturalism and social justice (Beer, Spanierman, Greene, & Todd, 2012; Vera & Speight, 2003, Watts, 2004). Goodman and her colleagues (2004) asserted that social justice in counseling psychology has the ability to support marginalized groups in gaining "increased access to . . . tools of self-determination"(p. 795). The authors identified six ways that counseling psychologists can be trained as social justice agents using feminist and multicultural counseling principles. These included "(a) ongoing self-examination, (b) sharing power, (c) giving voice, (d) facilitating consciousness raising, (e) building on strengths, and (f) leaving clients the tools to work towards social change" (Goodman et al., p. 793). A major strength of the Goodman et al.'s (2004) analysis lay in the fact that it outlined concrete recommendations that trainers and trainees can use to improve their abilities to conduct social justice work and promote social action; however, their discussion of social justice work occurred on a broad and general level, and was limited in the recommendations that it made towards specific forms of oppression (e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia).

A recent study examining counseling psychology trainees' commitment to social justice challenged psychologists to engage more fully in working to counteract various forms of injustice. Beer and her colleagues (2012) suggested that the field as a whole must work to expand beyond its traditional roles in the classroom or therapy space, and collaborate with individuals, communities, and organizations to transform oppressive systems. As part of this

process, counseling psychologists should bring aspects of their own personal selves into the collaboration with those seeking liberation from oppression, as a means of being actively involved in forming a strong working alliance (Utsey et al., 2001). These recommendations converge with some of the basic tenets of sociopolitical development.

In response to the recommendations outlined by Goodman and her colleagues (2004), Watts (2004) expanded Goodman et al.'s model for social justice training by incorporating facets of Black Psychology, which is also consistent with many of the tenets of sociopolitical development in its acknowledgement of race-related oppression and the promotion of liberation. Watts suggested that the six initial recommendations identified by Goodman and colleagues, while useful, are limited in that they draw from a framework that is heavily informed by a European American-influenced, mainstream psychology. Watts strongly encouraged the use of concepts that “depart sharply with conventional thinking in U.S. psychology” by promoting an approach “central to a psychology of liberation and social justice” (p. 857).

Utsey, Bolden, and Brown (2001) also acknowledged that although “there have been numerous attempts by psychologists and other mental health practitioners to address, in the context of counseling and psychotherapy, the deleterious effects of . . . oppression on the psychological well-being of African Americans”, these attempts have fallen short (p. 312). They suggested that BLP, with its emphasis on empowering and liberating oppressed individuals through social and psychological change, is effective in compensating for these limitations in its rejection of traditional, Eurocentric psychological theories. Liberation, which is implied as “fighting for one’s self interests, where the idea of self is grounded in social identity” (Utsey et al., 326), is a foundational aspect of sociopolitical development, and also has direct implications for the aforementioned discussions on social justice in counseling psychology. Furthermore, the

integration of certain BLP-based values (e.g., self-determination and consciousness-raising) in the empirical study of the psychological experiences of people of African descent living in America, have the potential to extend the research on Black racial identity theory and its related outcomes (Watts, 2004).

Sociopolitical development and racial identity attitudes. Despite psychologists' recommendations about the importance of engaging in social justice activism and partnering with individuals of African descent to encourage empowerment and dismantle racial oppression, there is a paucity of research examining the association between Black racial identity and sociopolitical development. This is surprising, given that the roots of Black racial identity and sociopolitical development converge in the early writings of Cross (1971), and his identification of the "Negro-to-Black conversion experience" (p. 13). Cross explicitly addressed the importance of the racial identity development process in facilitating "psychological liberation under conditions of oppression", and promoting individual and collective change as a means to dismantle racism (p. 14). Although the theoretical conceptualization of racial identity has since evolved, a few studies have addressed the relation between racial identity and social action as a means to sociopolitical development.

In one of the first examinations of the link between racial identity and sociopolitical development, Watts (1992) investigated the relation between racial identity and social change strategies in a sample of Black civil service employees. Using the Black Racial Identity Scale (RIAS; Parham & Helms, 1981), he found that individuals high in pre-encounter racial identity attitudes preferred social change strategies that emphasize personal contact actions, such as integrating and socializing with White people. Conversely, individuals higher in immersion and internalization attitudes preferred organized activist strategies aimed at affecting policies,

practices, and mobilization of Black people to promote social change and combat racism. Watts' findings suggested that additional support should be found for the relation between racial identity and social change strategies. In particular, these findings infer that differential relationships with social change strategies may exist among individuals with somewhat polarized attitudes about their racial identity.

Lott (2008) examined the influence of racial identity attitudes on perceptions of community outreach, as a measure of sociopolitical development, among African American students at HBCUs and PWIs. Lott also used the Black Racial Identity Scale (B-RIAS; Parham & Helms, 1981) in combination with a number of demographic variables and an indicator of community outreach to obtain a deeper understanding of sociopolitical attitudes. Findings from hierarchical multiple regression analyses revealed a strong, positive association between immersion/internalization scores and community orientation, as well as a strong, positive relationship between internalization stage scores and civic participation. Conversely, a negative relation between racial identity and community outreach scores indicated that individuals who endorse racial identity attitudes consistent with the pre-encounter stage were more likely to report less involvement with community outreach activities.

These findings provide support for the link between racial identity and positive psychological outcomes; however, scholars recognize that these contributions, while important, are only a drop in the bucket. Lott (2008) suggested that more research specifically examining the relation between internalization racial identity attitudes and actual as well as perceived community involvement is necessary. In addition, the author encouraged researchers to “expand the methodological design” in order to “provide insight into civic perceptions of Black students” as a proxy for understanding sociopolitical development. The work of Watts (1992) and Lott

provided explicit support for the relation between racial identity attitudes and various measures of sociopolitical attitudes and beliefs, particularly the relation between internalized racial identity attitudes and greater endorsement or practice of sociopolitical beliefs or actions.

Despite the consistency in the results, there are some limitations with respect to the design and findings of this research. First, these studies used the RIAS, which has been widely criticized for its psychometric limitations (see Cokley, 2007). More recently, scholars have utilized the CRIS to better understand the link between racial identity attitudes and African American Activism, as a form of sociopolitical development. In their study examining the role of race-related stress and racial identity as predictors of engagement in African American Activism, Szymanski and Lewis (2013) found that the race-related variables accounted for more than 25% of the variance in involvement in African American activism scores. Furthermore, three racial identity dimensions (Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, Internalization Afrocentricity, and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive), and cultural race-related stress, were the only positive predictors of involvement in African American activism, and Internalization Afrocentricity mediated the relationship between cultural race-related stress and engagement in African American activism.

These findings provide important support for the utility of the CRIS in consistently measuring racial identity attitudes, and point to a link between internalized Nigrescence attitudes as well as immersion-oriented attitudes, and indices of sociopolitical engagement; however, the aforementioned studies do not utilize multivariate procedures to identify patterns in racial identity attitudes and reflect the complexities in how African Americans think about race. Researchers have more recently called for the use of multivariate procedures to obtain more informative details about patterns in racial identity attitudes, instead of using bivariate analyses

such as correlations or simple linear regressions that only indicate participants' endorsement of each scale separately (Vandiver et al, 2002; Worrell et al., 2006). Additionally, each of the authors noted the lack of accurate scales to measure constructs related to sociopolitical development, and specifically engagement in activism, perceptions of racism or attitudes about addressing racism (Szymanski, 2012). Additional research is needed to provide conceptual support and clarification of these constructs in particular and of the relation between racial identity attitudes and sociopolitical development in general.

Sociopolitical development and methodological considerations. There is substantial research using multiple forms of methodological inquiry (e.g., qualitative analyses, case study designs) to examine sociopolitical development (Ginwright, 2007; Watkins, Larson, & Sullivan, 2007; Watts, Griffith, Abdul-Adil, 1999). However, there is little research using mixed methods design to explore the relation between sociopolitical development and race-related variables. In one of the few published mixed methods studies in this area, Diemer, Kaufman, Koenig, Trahan, and Hsieh (2006) explored the relation between critical consciousness (as a measure of sociopolitical development) and urban adolescents' perceived support for challenging racism, sexism, and social injustice from peers, family, and community members. The researchers collected and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously and in a complementary manner, with participants completing a survey packet that included questionnaire items as well as an open-ended question. The responses from the open-ended question were later quantitized and analyzed using quantitative analytic methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Findings suggested that support for challenging racism, sexism, and social injustice was associated with reflective aspects of critical consciousness; however, these constructs were not related to the action components of critical consciousness. Furthermore, participants felt they

were most supported in addressing instances of racism, then social justice, and least supported in addressing sexism. Finally, young women perceived more support for addressing sexism than young men in the study; each of these findings provided convergence in their results with existing research on critical consciousness and support for addressing issues of social injustice (Diemer et al., 2006).

Although Diemer and colleagues' (2006) study makes an important contribution to the research literature, the quantization of the qualitative data for analytic purposes, as well as the collection of participants' responses via open-ended questions may have resulted in missing or limited information about individuals' experiences with challenging the social injustices examined in this study. In fact, Diemer et al. acknowledged, "other forms of qualitative data (interviews/focus groups) may facilitate a more nuanced and in-depth exploration of perceived support for challenging racism, sexism, and social injustices upon critical consciousness development" (p. 457). Given the limited use of mixed methods inquiry in the investigation of certain constructs, the extant research literature can only benefit from a deeper understanding of these social issues.

Conclusion

As the field of psychology continues to move forward in its understanding of Black racial identity attitudes, it is important for researchers to consider the social and historical contexts from which this topic emerged – namely from the writings of Black scholars who understood that the identity development experiences of Blacks in America was often politicized by their experiences in a society where they regularly struggled with oppression. By connecting the research on social justice and sociopolitical outcomes with the continuing discussion on Black racial identity, psychologists, as well as those communities they serve, can begin to develop an

awareness of how to combat oppression and promote psychological well-being and liberation among people of African descent living in America through self-discovery, consciousness-building, and empowerment.

Racial identity theory and sociopolitical development share a common thread as constructs that find their roots in the struggle to address and overcome racial oppression through exploration of self-concept, social action and advocacy. Although the racial identity research reflects a relation with a number of psychological and social constructs, including sociopolitical development, the current project seeks to utilize more advanced analyses and multiple methods of research inquiry to provide additional support for the link between racial identity and race-related constructs, as a proxy for understanding sociopolitical engagement.

The Present Study

The purpose of the current study was to build on the emerging empirical research that has been conducted on racial identity to date, using an integrative, sequential explanatory mixed methods design to develop a more complex understanding of the nature of racial identity attitude patterns, and the relation between racial identity attitudes and sociopolitical outcomes. Previous research has identified a link between the racial attitudes of Black Americans and their sociopolitical attitudes and beliefs. For African Americans, having positive, internalized attitudes about one's racial identity can aid in resisting various forms of oppression (such as racism) and promoting social action. By investigating this area of study further, both researchers and practitioners of psychology can become better informed about the relationship between racial self-concept and social justice in populations of color in general, and among young adults of African descent in particular.

The current study sought to answer the following research questions:

- (1) Did cluster analyses for this investigation reveal patterns of racial identity attitudes that are consistent with the expanded Nigrescence theory and previous empirical research (Whittaker & Neville, 2010; Worrell et al., 2006)?
H₁: On the basis of theoretical and empirical research, I predict that there will be at least three cluster groups: a pre-encounter cluster, an immersion-emersion cluster, and an internalization cluster.
- (2) Did differential associations exist between racial identity attitude patterns and sociopolitical outcomes, specifically strategies used to address racism and promote social action?

H₂: I predict that participants in the internalization cluster(s) will engage in more social activism compared to participants in the pre-encounter cluster(s).

- (3) If differences were found between racial identity attitude patterns, what are the ways in which participants engage in social activism, especially within the internalization cluster group(s)?

Mixed methods study design. The present study used mixed methods inquiry to investigate the relation between racial identity attitudes, anti-racism attitudes and strategies, and general social activism. In this study I adopted an a-paradigmatic stance (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). This stance posits that sound mixed methods research can be conducted without an in-depth examination or discussion of paradigms, which are defined as “[models] of inquiry that [specify] particular inquiry purposes or uses . . . [and that incorporate] particular presuppositions about social reality” (Phillips, as cited in Greene, 2007, p. 51). Instead, mixed methods research that assumes an a-paradigmatic stance is driven by practical considerations, such as the research questions identified in the project or in the methods considered to be most applicable to address those research questions. Therefore, the mixing of methods occurred at the levels of data collection, analysis, and interpretation; “mixing” did not occur at the paradigmatic level. Given that a central aim of this study was to build on the findings from the previous research on racial identity attitudes, the major decisions about the design of the study and the identified research questions are driven by the extant literature, which is primarily quantitative and by extension, consistent with a post-positivist paradigmatic tradition. Scholars writing in this area have, however, suggested that the absence of qualitative and mixed methods studies is a limitation of the research (Lyons et al., 2012; Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007; Whittaker & Neville, 2010). The present study represented the first steps towards addressing this concern.

Mixing methods in this study occurred for the purpose of complementarity, which is driven by the desire to seek “broader, deeper, and more comprehensive social understandings by using methods that tap into different facets or dimensions of the *same complex phenomenon*” (Greene, 2007, p. 101). Incorporating qualitative methods with quantitative methods in the same research study can help to augment what is already known about racial identity and its correlates from a primarily quantitative perspective. The findings have the potential to provide researchers with a multifaceted view of the perspectives represented by the racial identity attitudes, and ultimately to “reflect . . . insights and perceptions that indeed contribute to better understanding” (Greene, 2007, p. 101).

This study employed an integrated, sequential explanatory mixed method design, which is “the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. . . where priority is typically given to the quantitative data, and the two methods are integrated during the interpretation phase of the study” (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003, p. 223). In the first phase of the study, quantitative data collected via self-report surveys were analyzed, and the results used to purposefully select participants whose responses reflected specific racial identity attitude patterns for the second phase of the study. In this phase, the qualitative data were collected, analyzed, and ultimately interpreted within the context of the quantitative analyses. Thus, the ultimate goal in this mixed methods design was to use the findings from the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study to inform and illustrate each other in a sequential fashion (QUAN → Qual; see Figure 1).

Qualitative data were collected using a series of online small group or individual interviews, the protocol for which was informed by a focus group interviewing methodology. Consistent with the a-paradigmatic stance of the study, which assumes that practical decisions

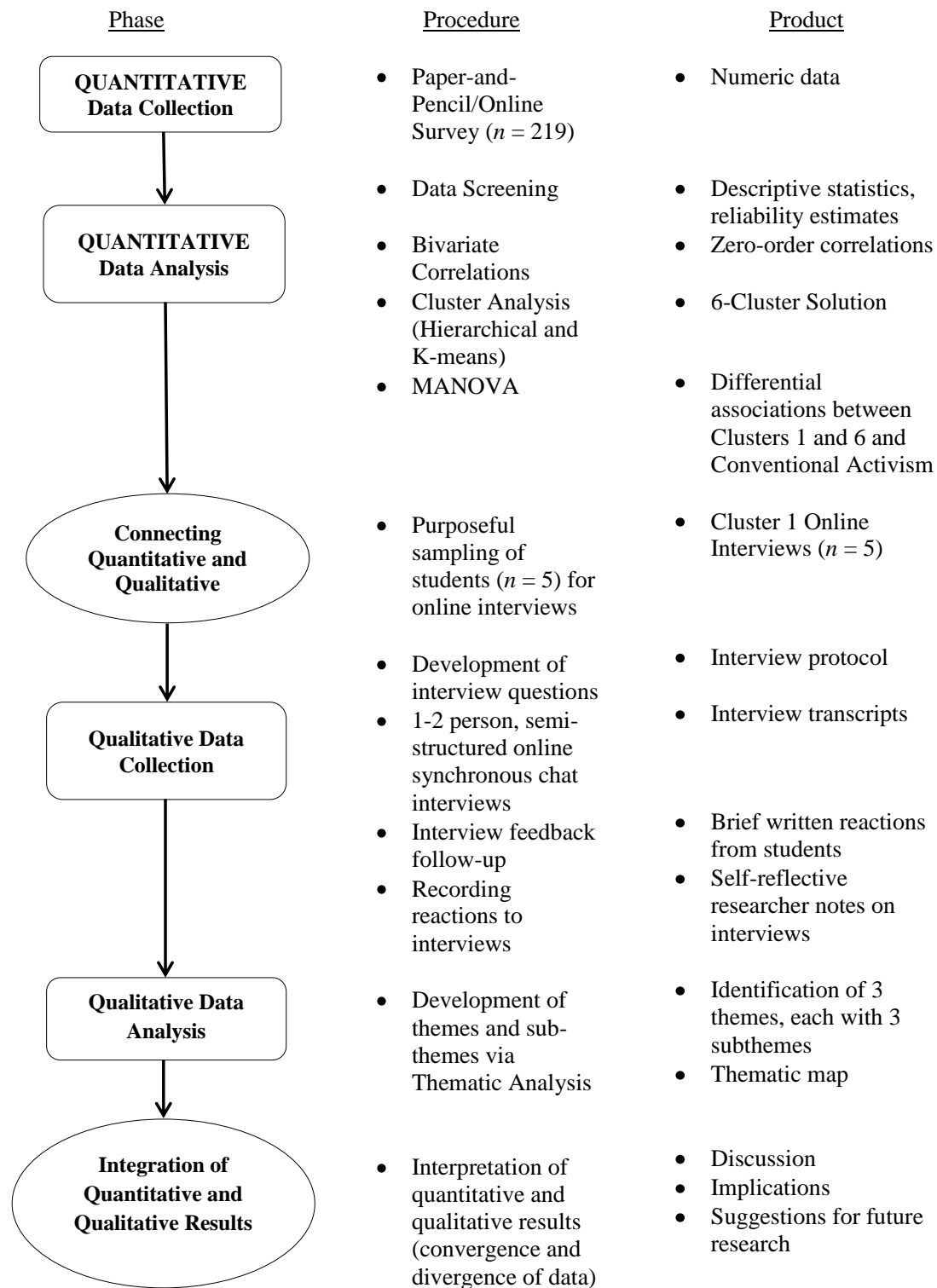


Figure 1. Visual Model for Integrated Sequential Explanatory Mixed Methods Design Procedures (adapted from Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006).

around inquiry are driven by the demands of the context, my research chair and I opted to conduct synchronous online, text-based interviews with participants in an chat or instant messaging (IM) environment. As indicated by Tate and colleagues (2009), the internet is more widely recognized as an important research tool, and can be useful when “[including] participants who are hard to reach using traditional research methods” (p. 1). Furthermore, online individual or group discussions can provide a range of benefits to both researchers and participants, in particular when it comes to overcoming barriers around geographical distance and time and resources involved with traveling to participate in (or facilitate) an interview (Jowett, Peel, and Shaw, 2011). Online interviewing can also allow for an added degree of anonymity, which may be appealing for some participants (particularly those who hold underrepresented or marginalized identities) when it comes to sharing personal or sensitive information with an individual that they do not know well.

In deciding to conduct online interviews, I continued to take into account the recommendations of scholars and experts in the social sciences, and particularly in the field of counseling psychology, around the importance of quality in conducting qualitative research and using a culturally competent lens to understand the personal experiences of Black students as they related to racial identity and sociopolitical engagement (Lyons et al., 2012). In her discussion of trustworthiness and qualitative research, Morrow (2005) recommends certain criteria for trustworthiness of an investigation, regardless of paradigmatic consideration or research design. Among these are *reflexivity*, my position as a “*researcher-as-instrument*”, and *purposeful* sampling, in addition to suggestions on the qualitative data analysis process.

Awareness around my “insider/outsider status”, and the balance associated with negotiating these perspectives in an online interviewing format was also a central to conducting my qualitative

data collection and analyses (Jowett et al., 2011, p. 363). Ultimately, the focus of the interviews remained exploratory in nature, in order to maintain consistency with the mixed methods purpose of complementarity, which is tasked with creating, constructing, identifying, discovering, explaining, and generating [a deeper understanding of] thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Utsey et al., 2005 p. 457). This research study represented a first step in developing a deeper and more complex understanding of the relation between racial identity and individuals' perspectives on encouraging social change, particularly with respect to racism.

CHAPTER 3: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

Quantitative Study Method

The purpose of the quantitative phase of the research project was to provide support for the replicability of Nigrescence attitude patterns among Black college students previously identified in the research, and to determine whether a differential relation existed between these patterns and various sociopolitical engagement outcomes. Consistent with the integrated, sequential, explanatory mixed methods design of the study, the third aim of the quantitative phase of the study was to purposefully identify a subgroup of individuals from the total sample whose racial identity attitude patterns were related to sociopolitical engagement, for participation in the subsequent qualitative phase of the overall study.

Quantitative Study Participants. For the current study, a nationwide sample of 219 self-identified Black students was recruited from a series of colleges and universities throughout the United States over the three phases of data collection for the study. The majority of the students attended predominantly White institutions (PWI) ($n = 188$, 85.8% of sample), with the largest portion of that group recruited from a large, predominantly White Midwestern public university ($n = 160$, 73.1% of sample). A sizeable portion of the sample attended historically black colleges and universities ($n = 21$, 9.6% of sample), and 10 participants (4.6% of the sample) did not provide information on what school they attended. The sample consisted of 60 men (27.4% of sample) and 158 women (72.1% of sample), and one individual who identified as genderqueer (0.5% of sample). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 60 years old ($M = 22.2$ years old, $SD = 5.87$). Ethnically, the majority of the sample identified as African American, Black, or Black American (71.1% of the sample), and a notable portion identified as

“Multiethnic, including Biethnic or Biracial” (11.9%); however, all students in the sample identified racially as Black, or as Biracial or Multiracial, including Black.

Both undergraduates ($n = 178$, 81.7% of sample) and graduate and professional students ($n = 40$, 18.3% of sample) were recruited for the study, and one person did not report their academic standing. A sizeable portion of students in the study were pursuing degrees in the Social and Behavioral Sciences or Social Work (20.5% of sample), with the next largest portion pursuing degrees in Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (11.0% of sample). A large percentage of participants indicated that they were not active in any race or ethnic-focused organizations (37.4%) or any non-race or ethnic-focused organization (38.4%). A little over a third of participants (34.7%) reported being active in one ethnic organization, and nearly 3 out of ten participants (28.8%) reported being involved in two campus organizations. The percentage of students who reported current involvement in community service (46.1%) was almost equal to the percentage that reported that they were not currently involved in community service but had been in the past (48.9%); only 4.1% of the sample indicated that they had never participated in community service in the past.

The majority of students in the sample reported that they were raised in mostly black neighborhoods (60.7% of sample), with about half (51%) coming from a self-reported middle class background and a quarter (25.1%) coming from a working class family. Additionally, one-fifth (20.1%) of the participants reported the highest level of education obtained by their mother (or female guardian) was “some college”, and the highest level of education obtained by nearly one-fifth (18.7%) of fathers (or male guardians) was “some high school”. The overwhelming majority of participants in the sample were U.S. citizens (93.1%) and most identified as Christian (82.2%), with the next largest percentage identifying as “spiritual” (5.0%).

Quantitative Study Measures and Materials. In addition to the following measures, participants were required to complete a demographic sheet requesting information on their age, gender, racial and ethnic identifications, academic class standing, family's socioeconomic status, educational level of each parent or guardian, and involvement in campus and community organizations as well as service-related activities.

Racial identity attitudes. To assess racial identity attitudes and beliefs, participants completed the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS; Vandiver, Cross, Fhagen-Smith, Worrell, Swim, & Caldwell, 2000; Worrell, Vandiver, & Cross, 2004). The CRIS is the most up-to-date and accurate means of measuring racial identity attitudes within the context of Cross's revised and expanded model of Nigrescence. The CRIS is a 40-item scale that measures the following six of the nine attitudes in Cross's expanded Nigrescence model (Vandiver et al., 2002; Worrell et al., 2004): pre-encounter assimilation (PA), which describes a pro-American identity (e.g., "I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American"); pre-encounter miseducation (PM), which focuses on negative stereotypes relating to African Americans (e.g., "Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work"); pre-encounter self-hatred (PSH), which indicates a self-hating and anti-Black identity (e.g., "Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black"); immersion-emersion anti-White (IEAW), describing distrust of Whites and an anti-White attitude (e.g., "I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people"); internalization Afrocentricity (IA), which reflects a pro-Black or African-centered attitude (e.g., "I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective"); and internalization multiculturalists inclusive (IMCI), which describes a collective acceptance of the Black race as well as other cultural groups (e.g., "As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups [Hispanic, Asian Americans, Whites, Jews, gay men, lesbians, etc.]"). Each subscale

consists of five items; the instrument also includes 10 “filler” items that are not scored. Responses for the CRIS are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) through 7 (*strongly agree*). Subscale scores are generated by obtaining the sums of scores on each subscale and dividing by five, which yields a set of total subscale scores ranging from one to seven.

Several studies have obtained support for the validity and reliability of the CRIS with a variety of student and community populations across the United States (Vandiver et al., 2001; Vandiver et al., 2002; Worrell et al., 2004). The six-factor structure of the CRIS has been consistently supported in three different studies using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (Vandiver et al., 2001; Vandiver et al., 2002; Worrell et al., 2004). Convergent validity has been supported through the CRIS subscales’ association with the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (Sellers et al., 1998) (Worrell, Vandiver, & Cross, 2004) and discriminant validity through the weak associations between the CRIS and measures of social desirability and Big Five personality factors (Worrell, Vandiver, & Cross, 2004). Support for the internal consistency of the CRIS with African American college student populations was also obtained, with alpha coefficient estimates ranging from .70 (*PSH*; Worrell et al., 2004) to .89 (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, 2012). For the current study, alpha coefficient estimates for the CRIS subscales ranged from .80 (*IMCI*) to .89 (*PA* and *IEAW*).

Strategies for reducing racism. To assess individuals’ perceptions of personal and institutional commitments to confronting and eliminating racism (as a proxy for sociopolitical engagement), participants completed two scales from the Multi-Dimensional Measurement of Institutional Racism (IRS; Barbarin & Gilbert, 1981): the Effectiveness of Strategies to Reduce Racism and the Extent of Use of Strategies to Reduce Racism. Scales on the IRS measure “how

individuals construe racism [and] self-perceptions with respect to changing or altering racist practices” (Barbarin, 1996, p. 389). The Effectiveness of Strategies to Reduce Racism scale consists of a list of “interventions”, where respondents are asked to rate on a 4-point Likert-type from 1 (*poor*) to 4 (*excellent*) (e.g., “Demonstrate and picket against racist practices”; “Provide education about the subtleties of racism”) (Barbarin, 1996, p. 391-392). The Extent of Use of Strategies to Reduce Racism scale asks participants to rate the extent to which they personally use the aforementioned effectiveness interventions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very frequently*).

There is limited information on the Effectiveness and Use of Strategies for Reducing Racism, and the Personal Efforts to Reduce Racism scales. Initial support for the reliability and validity of the scales has been found with a variety of diverse populations, including African Americans (Barbarin, 1996; Watts, 1992). For example, a medium, positive correlation ($r = .41$) was found between the Extent of Use of Strategies for Reducing Racism scale and hopefulness for change among employees in a government agency regarding racist practices; this provides support for the convergent validity of this scale (Barbarin, 1996). Watts (1992) also found that Strategies for Reducing Racism was related to racial identity attitudes and strategies for social change among African American civil service employees. In the aforementioned study, the internal consistency estimate for the 11-item *effectiveness of strategy* scale was .76. For the current study, alpha coefficient estimates were .78 (*extent of use* total score) and .79 (*effectiveness of strategy* total score).

Engagement in social activist behaviors. To assess for participants’ self-reported engagement in social activism, individuals completed the Activism Orientation Scale (AOS; Corning & Myers, 2002). The AOS is a 35-item scale designed to measure willingness to engage

in general social activist behaviors. The aim of the scale is to measure involvement in social activism across a wide range of “causes, social movements, and political ideologies” (Corning & Myers, p. 707). Participants responded to the overarching prompt: “How likely is it that you will engage in this activity in the future?” and selected ratings of likelihood that ranged from 0 (*extremely unlikely*) to 3 (*extremely likely*). The AOS is organized into two subscales: *Conventional Activism* (28 items; e.g., “attend a talk on a particular group’s social or political concerns,” “purchase a poster, t-shirt, etc. that endorses a political point of view”) and *High-Risk Activism* (7 items; e.g., “engage in a physical confrontation at a political rally,” “block access to a building or public area with your body”). For both total and subscale scores items are summed with higher scores indicating higher activism orientation.

There is promising support for the reliability and validity of this scale with both college and community populations. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients ranged from .87 to .92 (*high-risk activism*), and from .91 to .95 (*conventional activism*). Support for the scale’s construct validity has been found, with a strong, positive relations identified between the AOS items and measures of political locus of control. Additionally, the AOS was found to be a predictor of engagement in women’s issues, in a sample of female college students (Corning & Myers, 2002). In a sample of non-university, “Employed Activists” (i.e., a homogenous, career-activist group), their scores on the AOS were significantly positively related to their scores on measures of environmental activism (Corning & Myers, p. 722). In more recent studies, alpha reliability coefficients have remained in a consistent range with a diverse student population (i.e., .96 for *AOS total score*; Beer et al., 2012). In the current study the alpha coefficients were .96 (*conventional activism*) and .85 (*high-risk activism*).

Quantitative Study Procedures. Quantitative data collection for the study took place over the 2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013 academic years. During the first two years, paper-and-pencil surveys were distributed to students enrolled in courses at a large, Midwestern university; during the last academic year, an online survey was launched by the researcher and distributed nationally to Black students enrolled in undergraduate, graduate, professional school, and 2-year programs. Efforts were made to recruit at a nearby community college in the same metropolitan area as the university, after IRB approval for that site was obtained; however, course instructors and community partners were largely non-responsive to recruitment efforts and surveys distributed ($n = 15$) were not returned to the researcher.

Paper-and-pencil survey recruitment and data collection. Paper-and pencil survey data collection took place at a large, predominantly White, four-year Midwestern university in the Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2012, and Spring 2013 semesters. Prior to the start of the investigation, permission was secured from the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and amendments were sought accordingly based on changes in the data collection for the study. A nonrandom sample of participants was obtained from within the student body at the institution by asking faculty, staff, and student leaders for permission to recruit from their classes and student organization meetings. Efforts were made to obtain equal representation among male and female genders.

At the university instructors were contacted for recruitment in courses that had a high enrollment of Black and African American students, or that had a high general enrollment in order to increase the likelihood of obtaining a representative and diverse sample of Black and African American students. Participants were sampled from courses affiliated with the Departments of African American Studies, Educational Psychology and Psychology, including:

AFRO 100 and 199 (Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2012), AFRO 101, 103, 211, and 342 (Spring 2012); and EPSY 201, 220, 236, 400, 404, 420, and 485 (Spring 2011).

At each academic institution, permission was obtained from course instructors for the researcher (and in some cases, her research chair) to attend class meetings in the aforementioned departments, in order to briefly discuss the purpose of the study and distribute a survey packet to interested students; during the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 semesters, a colleague of the researcher serving as the research chair's research assistant distributed surveys on behalf of the researcher. In the department of Educational Psychology, the researcher applied to have information about the study posted in the department's Subject Pool, which enables students who are eligible to participate in the study to contact the researcher about completing a survey packet, in exchange for research credit that can be applied towards a course requirement. In all instances, students were told that their participation in the study is voluntary, and that it would not have any effect on their standing in the course from which they were being recruited. Students were allowed to ask questions about their participation in the study if they have any questions at that time. In certain classes, those students who were interested in volunteering were provided with a copy of the survey packet, and arrangements were made for the researcher to return to the class a week later to collect any completed survey materials; in other classes, the course instructor or teaching assistant collected completed surveys and returned them directly to the researcher. For classes where the initial response rate was low in comparison to the enrollment, the researcher made an additional request for volunteers, in order to encourage additional student participation. Similar arrangements were made for the researcher to return to the class meeting to pick up any additional completed surveys. In three classes (all in the African American Studies department),

instructors allowed students to complete the surveys in class, and two of the instructors offered extra credit as an additional incentive for participating in the research study.

In order to recruit participants from Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) that self-identify as Black or African-American interest organizations (as determined by the university's Office of Registered Organizations), representatives from those organizations were contacted to request assistance with recruiting group members for the research investigation. From the organizations contacted, the researcher was invited to attend the university's Black Graduate Student Association, and to request volunteers from within their general body membership. Individuals who were interested in participating in the study were given the option to complete their survey packets after the meeting has concluded and turn their paperwork in at that time, or bring their completed consent forms and surveys to be collected at the next general body meeting. The researcher collect survey packets that had been completed at the end of the meeting, and returned to the next meeting to collect additional completed survey packets; in certain instances, students returned survey packets to her directly outside of the meetings by leaving them in an unmarked sealed manilla folder in her departmental mailbox.

Each participant received a survey packet with an informed consent form, which provided details about the purpose of the study, length of the survey, duties of the participant, potential risks, discomforts, and incentives/rewards associated with the study, information about the participant's rights as a research volunteer, confidentiality, and details on how to contact the principle investigator for the study. Two copies of the consent form were attached to the survey packet; one that the student returned to the researchers, and one that he or she was encouraged to keep for their own records. If a student decided not to participate in the study, he or she was asked to return any incomplete documents to the researcher or destroy them on his or her own.

Students who agreed to volunteer for the quantitative phase of the study completed a series of surveys asking for information on their attitudes and beliefs about their race and racial group, their perspectives on various strategies for addressing racism, and participation in a range of activist behaviors. Finally, students completed a demographic questionnaire, which collected information about their race, gender, age, family's socioeconomic status, education level/class standing, program of study, and active participation in race-specific and non-race specific campus and community organizations and service projects. At the end of the survey, participants were also given the opportunity to complete a detachable raffle entry form to win one of four \$50 VISA gift cards. After participants turned in their surveys, they were given a debriefing form with information about the study and a list of relevant reading and internet resources. Based on participant feedback, the entire survey packet took approximately 20 minutes to complete from start to finish.

As the mixed methods study design incorporated interviewing as a part of the overall data collection for the study, the IRB proposal was amended during the quantitative data collection process to request approval to conduct a series of interviews with a subset of individuals in the project who had completed surveys. During the recruitment and informed consent procedures for the quantitative study, participants were notified about the second phase of the study (i.e., the qualitative phase), and verbally informed that if they volunteered that they might be contacted for this phase of the study. This information was also listed on the consent form, and students were asked to respond to a question indicating whether or not they were interested in volunteering to participate in a follow-up discussion about the issues addressed in the study.

Each questionnaire packet that was distributed had a code number written at the top of the consent form and the first page of the survey, so that the researcher was able to connect each

participant's name to a code, and each code to participants' de-identified questionnaire responses for the purpose of identifying specific participants to participate in the focus group based on their cluster group assignment. After questionnaire packets were completed and collected, participants' names and code numbers were compiled in a separate, password-protected spreadsheet on a password-protected computer, to which only the researcher had access. The code numbers, contact information, and school affiliation was kept separately from the de-identified survey data, which was ultimately entered into a separate password-protected file by hand by the researcher and a Bachelor's-level research assistant, who was trained by the researcher and her research chair in conducting human subjects research.

Online survey recruitment and data collection. During the Spring 2013 semester, additional participants were recruited for the study using online data collection methods, in order to increase the sample size to be more consistent with other cluster studies in the research literature. An amendment to the original IRB proposal was sought to account for this change in data collection. A nonrandom, nationwide sample of participants was obtained using a snowball sampling method, where the researcher contacted individuals who work with Black students in academic or student affairs settings, or who have informal access to Black student communities, and asked them to distribute an announcement about her study with a link to the online survey. The researcher also contacted individuals from her personal and professional networks and asked them to circulate the study announcement to Black students who met criteria for the project and would be interested in volunteering. Finally, the researcher posted her study announcement in the University of Illinois Black Graduate Student Association group, and sent requests for distribution to the Black Ph.D. group on Facebook©; the study announcement and reminders about recruitment were also posted on the researcher's personal Facebook wall. Efforts were

made to obtain equal representation among male and female genders, as well as representation from a range of geographic regions throughout the U.S.

The online survey was designed on and distributed from the SurveyGizmo© website, and was tested and modified based on feedback from researchers within the field of counseling psychology who are experienced with conducting research on race and racism. Students who were interested in volunteering for the study were directed to click on an encrypted web link where they were able to access a secure version of the online survey. Participants first viewed an informed consent page that contained an electronic version of the aforementioned consent form from the paper-and-pencil version of the survey. As part of the consent process, participants responded to a question asking whether they would be interested in participating in an online discussion as a follow-up to completing the survey; students could opt to indicate their interest in the discussion and provide their email and phone number for further contact at that time. Individuals who left the question blank were automatically not considered for the follow-up study. In order to indicate their consent to participate in the study, participants were asked to electronically sign the consent form by typing their first and last name into an open field box. When the participant clicked “submit”, they were immediately sent to the first page of the survey. As the consent form was built in the system to link to the questionnaire, the researcher separated participants’ names and contact information (if included) into a separate, password-protected spreadsheet immediately after exporting the data from the secure SurveyGizmo website, in order to de-identify participants’ survey responses and ensure that their privacy was protected.

Students directed to the online survey were asked to respond to the same questions on their attitudes and beliefs about their race and racial group, their perspectives on various

strategies for addressing and racism, participation in activist behaviors, and demographic questionnaire included in the paper-and-pencil version of the survey packet. Upon completing the demographic questionnaire, participants were directed to a page where they could download an electronic copy of the debriefing and resource sheet directly to their website, and where they could click on a link to be taken to a separate form where they could enter a raffle to win one of three \$50 VISA gift cards (separate from the paper-and-pencil survey raffle). Based on feedback from the testing phase, the online survey took approximately 25 minutes to complete from start to finish.

Quantitative Study Results

Data cleaning and transformation. Prior to data cleaning, paper-and-pencil survey responses were entered into SPSS by a Bachelors-level research assistant, and online survey responses were directly exported from SurveyGizmo into a separate SPSS spreadsheet; as data collection for the two versions of the study took place at different times, the responses were later merged into one complete data set for a final round of cleaning and transformation. In both instances, responses collected were checked to ensure the accuracy of data entry and exportation, and the range, minimum, and maximum values were initially obtained for each participant's responses to see whether there were values entered or imported incorrectly. A small number of participants were removed from the sample based on violations of inclusion criteria. Specifically, three participants were removed because they were not students, one case was removed because it was a duplicate response (i.e., a participant had re-taken the survey immediately after taking it for the first time), and three participants were removed because they did not identify as Black (based on demographic questions).

Data were then inspected for missing values and systematic nonresponse to items. For cases in which more than 15% of the items on a given (sub)scale were missing, that case was removed from the data set; based on this criteria, one participant was removed from the final sample. For cases in which $\leq 15\%$ of the items were missing on any given measure, Expectation/Maximization (EM) Estimation Method (Dempster, Laird, & Rubin, 1977) was used to impute missing data. This maximum likelihood procedure is seen as advantageous over estimation, imputation, and deletion methods that have been used in the past (i.e., mean imputation, listwise or pairwise deletion), in that it allows for the retention of data and the “nearly unbiased” estimation of means, variance, and covariances for an imputed value (Howell, 2008, p. 31). When addressing missing data, Howell recommends that an analyses should first be conducted to determine whether the data is or is not missing at random. Little’s (1998) MCAR [Missing Completely at Random] test, a chi-square analysis, was conducted on all items, and was not significant, indicating that data was missing completely at random. This means that missing data did not lead to biased parameter estimates (Howell). All missing data was estimated successfully, with the exception of one value in one outlier case, which was transformed to the next closest non-outlier number (Orr, Sackett, & Dubois, 1991).

Using box-plot graphs in SPSS, 6 respondents were identified as outliers based on their responses on the CRIS PSH (preencounter self-hatred) subscale, and 3 respondents were identified as outliers based on their responses on the CRIS IMCI (internalization multiculturalist inclusive) subscale. Rather than remove the participants from the sample, a square root transformation was used to change the distribution of the variable, and reduce the effect of the outliers (Wuensch, 2005). Given that there were relatively few (i.e., three) outliers on the CRIS

IMCI variable, the values of each outlier was transformed to the next closest non-outlier number, which also reduced their influence and brought the values within the distribution of the variable.

To check for the other assumptions of normality, indices of skewness and kurtosis were calculated and inspected to determine whether these values fell between ± 2.0 as a more conservative estimate for normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). All of the scales with the exception of the CRIS IEAW subscale (immersion-emersion anti-white) (skewness = 1.869 and kurtosis = 3.231) met the assumptions of normality. A negative reciprocal transformation was used to obtain a more normal distribution of scores. The transformation was successful, and produced a skewness and kurtosis score (.589 and -1.133, respectively) within the appropriate ranges.

Preliminary analyses. The means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlation values for all study variables are presented in Table 1. The correlations among the CRIS subscales were consistent with previously reported studies (Vandiver et al., 2002; Whittaker & Neville, 2010; Worrell et al., 2006). Significant small correlations were reported between the six CRIS subscales and various demographic variables ($r = -.24$ to $.30$). In addition, statistically significant, small positive correlations were reported among the pre-encounter racial identity attitude subscales (PA, PM, and PSH), which is consistent with the extant literature. Although a significant small negative correlation was found between the CRIS immersion-emersion subscale and the pre-encounter assimilation subscale ($r = -.23$), a significant small positive correlations were found between both the immersion-emersion subscale and the pre-encounter self-hatred subscale ($r = .34$) and the immersion-emersion and internalization Afrocentric subscales ($r = .36$). These seemingly contradictory results provide evidence to support an “identity in transition” or “conflicted” racial identity attitude association that has been found in previous

Table 1. Zero-order Correlations for Total Sample Among Study Variables

| Variable | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----|
| 1. Gender | 219 | - | - | - | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Age | 218 | 22.22 | 5.878 | -.04 | - | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Community Service Involvement | 219 | 1.74 | .472 | -.01 | -.02 | - | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Race-related Organization Membership | 219 | 1.06 | 1.170 | .03 | .08 | -.24** | - | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. CRISpa | 219 | 14.44 | 7.582 | -.05 | -.04 | .13 | -.24** | - | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. CRISpm | 219 | 17.23 | 6.585 | -.09 | -.16* | .06 | -.06 | .25** | - | | | | | | | | |
| 7. CRISpsh | 219 | 3.177 | .873 | .03 | -.16* | -.02 | -.03 | .18** | .17** | - | | | | | | | |
| 8. CRISieaw | 219 | -149.99 | 55.10 | -.07 | .06 | -.05 | .19** | -.23** | -.02 | .34** | - | | | | | | |
| 9. CRISia | 219 | 14.82 | 6.195 | -.09 | .19** | -.07 | .14* | -.22** | .19* | .14* | .35** | - | | | | | |
| 10. CRISimci | 219 | 27.60 | 5.621 | .19** | .05 | -.06 | .06 | -.05 | -.10 | -.10 | -.24** | -.02 | - | | | | |
| 11. AOSca | 219 | 41.40 | 17.71 | -.05 | .17* | -.16* | .30** | -.16* | -.16* | .03 | .17** | .30** | .23** | - | | | |
| 12. AOSha | 219 | 8.54 | 4.733 | -.07 | -.23** | -.17* | .30** | -.13 | -.02 | .06 | .13 | .07 | .05 | .60** | - | | |
| 13. SRRS-Ex | 219 | 20.35 | 4.858 | .09 | -.08 | -.15* | .18** | -.08 | .05 | -.01 | .00 | -.01 | .20** | .27** | .28** | - | |
| 14. SRRS-Ef | 219 | 29.80 | 6.936 | .03 | .12 | -.08 | .16* | -.03 | -.08 | .17* | .15* | .14* | .12 | .38** | .17* | .39** | - |

Note. Gender of participant (1 = male, 2 = female); CRISpa = Cross Racial Identity Scale pre-encounter assimilation subscale (5-35); CRISpm = Cross Racial Identity Scale pre-encounter miseducation subscale (5-35); CRISpsh = Cross Racial Identity Scale pre-encounter self-hatred subscale (5-35); CRISieaw = Cross Racial Identity Scale immersion-emersion anti-White subscale [transformed scale] (5-35); CRISia = Cross Racial Identity Scale internalization Afrocentric subscale (5-35); CRISimci = Cross Racial Identity Scale internalization multicultural identity subscale (5-35); AOSca = Activism Orientation Scale Conventional Activism subscale (0-74); AOSha = Activism Orientation Scale High-Risk Activism subscale (0-20); SRRS-Ex = Strategies for Reducing Racism Extent of Use scale (11-43); SRRS-Ef = Strategies for Reducing Racism Effectiveness of Strategy scale (7-33). * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

studies (Telesford et al., 2013; Worrell et al., 2006). A significant small correlation was reported between the internalization Afrocentric subscale and pre-encounter assimilation subscale ($r = -.22$); however significant small positive correlations were reported between internalization Afrocentric, pre-encounter miseducation and self-hatred subscales ($r = .19$ and $r = .14$, respectively). Significant small, positive correlations were found between the internalization Afrocentric and multiculturalist inclusive subscales and the AOS conventional activism subscale ($r = .30$ and $r = .23$, respectively). As expected based on the extant literature, significant small to large positive correlations were reported between each of the sociopolitical engagement outcome measures, ($r = .17$ to $.60$). Specifically, significant positive correlations were found between the conventional activism and high-risk activism subscales on the AOS, and the effectiveness and extent of use scales on the IRS, on which higher scores reflect a greater degree of engagement with, or higher levels of endorsement of, general and anti-racist activism.

Identifying racial identity attitude clusters (Main Analyses). Cluster Analysis is an exploratory statistical methods used to organize data into meaningful groups (Hair & Black, 2002; Worrell et al., 2006). To test the first research question, *Would cluster analyses for this investigation reveal a pattern of racial identity attitudes that are consistent with the expanded Nigrescence theory and with previous empirical research?*, a cluster analysis was conducted to determine the racial identity groupings across the six CRIS subscales. Prior to conducting the cluster analysis, the scores for each of the six subscales were converted to standardized z scores to allow for greater interpretability and to reduce the bias associated with nonstandardized scores (Hair and Black). Ward's (1963) hierarchical clustering method, as suggested by Borgen and Barnett (1987), was then used for this data set, as this technique is theoretically nested and uses Euclidian distance scores to minimize the within-group variance at each level of grouping

(Henry, Tolan, & Gorman-Smith, 2005). This method suggested a six-cluster solution as a potentially viable option for the data set. Second, a k-means cluster analysis was conducted, specifying a four-cluster solution, a five-cluster solution, and a six-cluster solution, in order to determine which solution was most consistent with the cluster groupings found in the previous literature (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, 2012; Telesford et al., 2013; Whittaker & Neville, 2010; Worrell et al.). Of the proposed cluster solutions, the six-cluster solution proved to be most viable in replicating the clusters patterns identified in the previous research literature (See Figure 1; Whittaker & Neville; Worrell et al.). Cluster groups ranged in size from 22 to 53 respondents, with all participants assigned to one of the six cluster groups. In the interest of remaining consistent with the cluster groups identified in the research literature to date, the current study used similar cluster solution names to differentiate between each cluster grouping. Furthermore, these cluster groups appear to be theoretically consistent with Nigrescence theory, and were grouped conceptually into one of three general categorizations: *pre-encounter (Assimilated, Low-Salience/Unaware)*, *identity in transition (Identity in Transition/Immersion, Identity in Transition/Self-Hatred)*, and *multiculturalist (Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement, Multiculturalist/Miseducated)*.

Cluster 1 – Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement – Cluster 1 ($n = 40$; Figure 2), is characterized by elevated scores on the internalization multiculturalist inclusive ($z = .62$) and immersion-emersion subscales ($z = .44$) and, as well as by low scores on each of the three pre-encounter subscales (assimilation, $z = -.86$; miseducation, $z = -1.07$, and self-hatred, $z = -.46$); there is a slight elevation on the internalization Afrocentric ($z = .06$) subscale as well. This cluster group has both the lowest scores on the pre-encounter miseducation subscale, and the highest score on the multiculturalist inclusive subscale, compared to the other five cluster groups

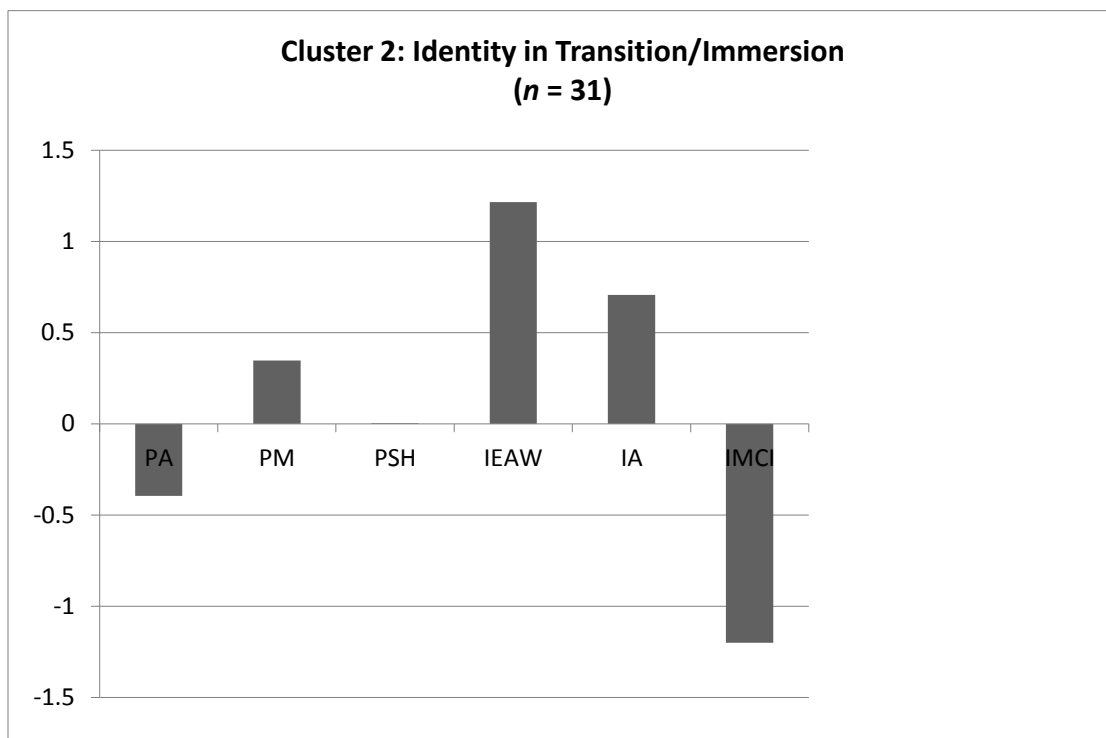
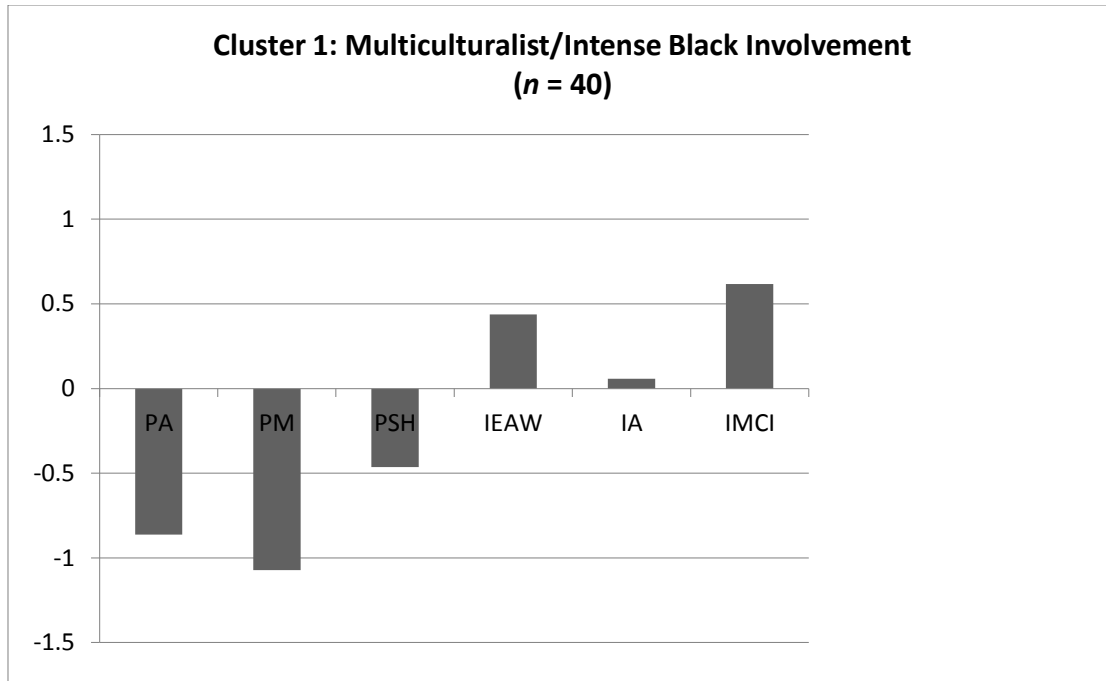


Figure 2. *Disaggregated Cluster Groups From Total Sample*

Note. PA = pre-encounter assimilation; PM = pre-encounter miseducation; PSH = pre-encounter self-hatred; IEAW = immersion-emersion anti-White; IA = internalization Afrocentric; IMCI = internalization multiculturalist inclusive.

in the sample. Conceptually, this group endorsed both multiculturalist attitudes and what appears to be anti-White attitudes in their survey responses; however, a closer examination of the literature suggests that the elevations on the immersion-emersion subscale may be reflective of Intense Black Involvement attitudes. As suggested by Chavez-Korell and Vandiver (2012), this conceptual attitude was not operationally measured on the CRIS due to high intercorrelations with the anti-White and Afrocentric subscales. The slight elevation on the Afrocentric subscale, provide support for the nuanced difference between these attitudes and anti-White attitudes. Additionally, students in this group generally did not endorse pre-encounter attitudes, which indicates that race is a salient and positively internalized identity for these individuals.

Cluster 2 – Identity In Transition/Immersion -- Cluster 2 ($n = 31$; Figure 2) reported the highest level of endorsement of immersion-emersion anti-White attitudes ($z = 1.22$), as well as the lowest level of immersion multiculturalist inclusive attitudes ($z = -1.22$), in comparison to all cluster groups in the total sample. This group also reported low scores on the pre-encounter assimilation subscale ($z = -.39$) and negligible scores on the pre-encounter self-hatred subscale ($z = .00$). An elevation on the internalization Afrocentric subscale ($z = .71$) suggest that this group places a great deal of importance on connecting with their Black identities, as well as possible rejection and distrust of mainstream White culture. For this group, however, slight elevations on the pre-encounter miseducation subscale ($z = .35$) suggest that individuals in this category may still struggle with balancing a pro-Black identity with internalized stereotypical information about the Black race. Worrell and colleagues (2006) identified a nonreplicating cluster in their two-part examination of CRIS cluster patterns, which they named “Identity in Transition” (p. 538). Similarities exist in the features of this cluster’s identity attitude patterns, particularly in the apparent conflict between miseducated, immersion-emersion, and Afrocentric attitudes.

Cluster 3 -- Assimilated -- The scores of participants in Cluster 3 ($n = 39$; Figure 3) reflect a greater endorsement of the pre-encounter assimilation subscale score ($z = .75$), as well as slight endorsement of internalization multiculturalist attitudes ($z = .06$). In contrast, individuals in this group reported among the lowest scores across each of the other subscales (miseducation, $z = -.85$; self-hatred, $z = -.16$; immersion-emersion, $z = -.77$; and Afrocentric, $z = -.91$). Conceptually, this reflects an interest in downplaying a focus on one's Black identity, and promoting one's similarity to other Americans. Individuals in this group most likely adopt a pro-American and "raceless" attitude towards their racial identity, which is also evidenced by the low scores across all of the other subscales except for multiculturalist inclusive. The slight elevation on the latter subscale suggests these participants have an appreciation for partnering with and engaging with diverse groups and possibly other identities, without internalizing a strong sense of their Blackness or feeling closely connected to their race.

Cluster 4 -- Multiculturalist/Miseducated -- Cluster 4 ($n = 53$; Figure 3), was the largest cluster group. Their racial identity attitude patterns are characterized by higher elevations on the internalization multiculturalist inclusive subscale ($z = .55$) and the pre-encounter miseducation subscale ($z = .53$), as well as low scores on the pre-encounter assimilation ($z = -.45$), pre-encounter self-hatred ($z = -.21$), and immersion-emersion ($z = -.53$) subscales. A slight elevation on the internalization Afrocentric subscale ($z = .22$) provides evidence that this group's racial identity attitudes reflect a strong internalization of their Blackness; however, this is contrasted by the potential influence of internalized miseducated attitudes. This finding suggests that this group is aware of, and may even believe there is truth in, negative stereotypical information about the Black race. Low self-hatred scores differentiate this cluster from others in the research literature

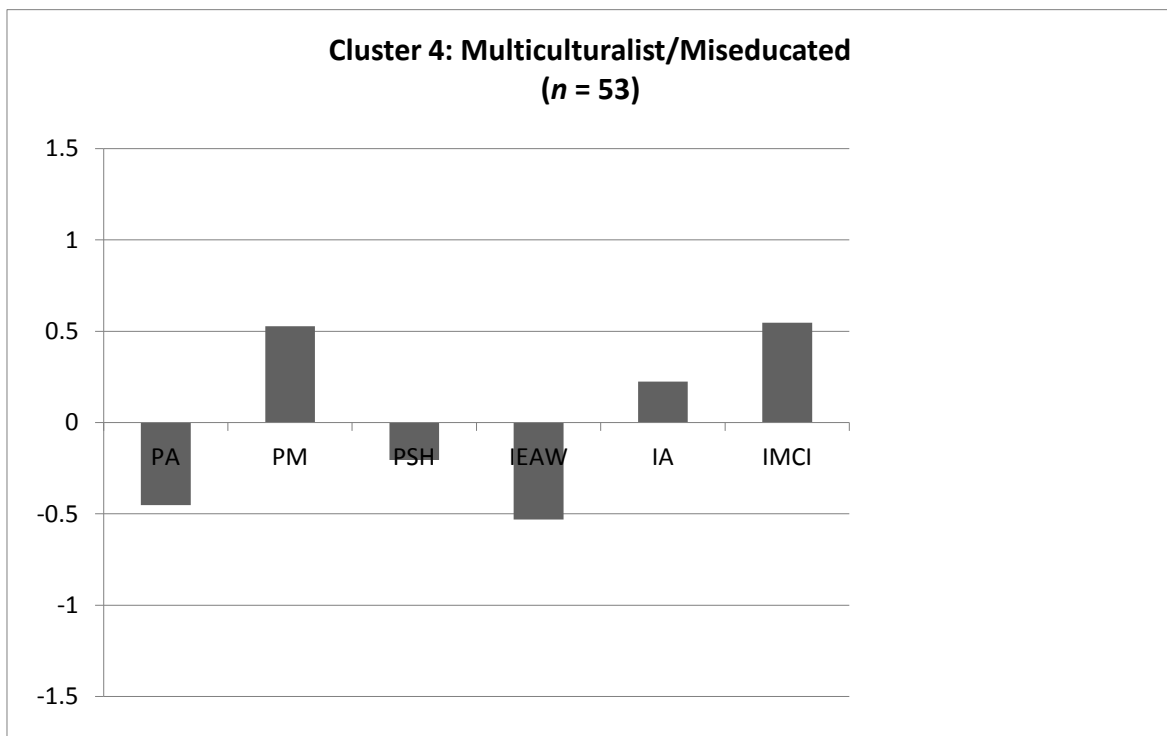
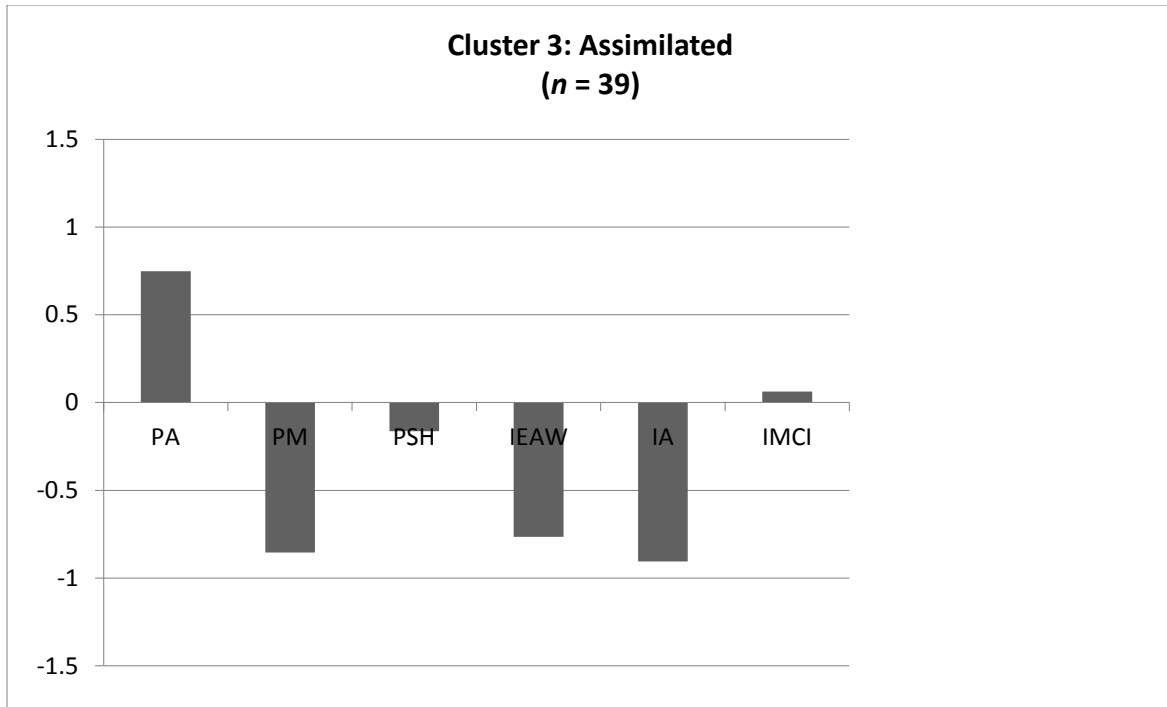


Figure 3. *Disaggregated Cluster Groups From Total Sample.*

Note. PA = pre-encounter assimilation; PM = pre-encounter miseducation; PSH = pre-encounter self-hatred; IEAW = immersion-emersion anti-White; IA = internalization Afrocentric; IMCI = internalization multiculturalist inclusive.

(Telesford et al., 2013; Worrell et al., 2006), and suggest that this group has not internalized self-hating attitudes despite endorsing untrue information about their race.

Cluster 5 – Identity-in-Transition/Self-hatred -- Cluster 5 ($n = 22$; Figure 4) was the smallest of the cluster groups, and reported the highest scores comparatively on the pre-encounter subscale ($z = 1.93$). This group also endorsed relatively high immersion-emersion attitudes ($z = 1.18$), and moderately high afrocentric attitudes ($z = .79$). Low elevations exist on pre-encounter assimilation ($z = .27$) and pre-encounter miseducation ($z = .45$) subscales, and there is a slight, but low z-score for the internalization multiculturalist inclusive subscale ($z = -.07$). This group, which shares consistencies in the patterns identified by Chavez-Korell and Vandiver (2012) and Telesford and colleagues (2013), reflects an endorsement of opposing attitudes regarding their racial identities (i.e., endorsement of both pre-encounter, transitional, and internalized Black identities). Similar to Cluster 2, the other Identity-in-Transition cluster, this group may struggle with balancing negative information about their race and a slight desire at times to dissociate with their Black identities, with a desire to engage in and adopt a stronger sense of their Blackness specifically. The distinction between this group and Cluster 2 lies in the strong endorsement of self-hatred attitudes around race, which may indicate some discomfort around fully connecting to an internalized Black identity.

Cluster 6 – Low-Salience/Unaware – Cluster 6's ($n = 34$; Figure 4) z-scores reflect greater endorsement of pre-encounter assimilation ($z = 1.05$) and pre-encounter miseducation ($z = .81$) attitudes, and low scores on all other subscales (self-hatred, $z = -.20$; immersion-emersion, $z = -.68$; Afrocentric, $z = -.53$; multicultural inclusive, $z = -.51$). This group's CRIS attitude patterns appeared similar to the *Assimilated* cluster, with the exception of the high endorsement of miseducated attitudes and lack of endorsement of multicultural inclusive attitudes.

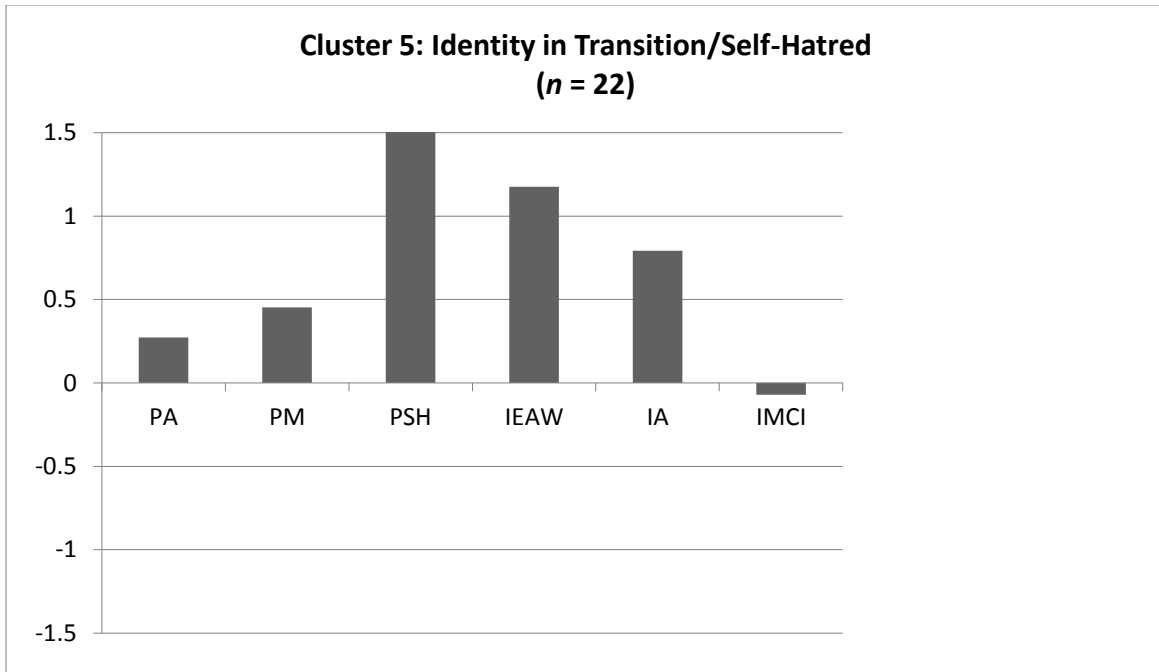


Figure 4. *Disaggregated Cluster Groups From Total Sample.*

Note. PA = pre-encounter assimilation; PM = pre-encounter miseducation; PSH = pre-encounter self-hatred; IEAW = immersion-emersion anti-White; IA = internalization Afrocentric; IMCI = internalization multiculturalist inclusive.

Conceptually, this group's scores indicate an avoidance in placing any focus or importance on race as being either positive, and a strong awareness of and belief in stereotypical information about the Black race and maintaining a Black identity (Worrell et al., 2006). In fact, this group endorsed attitudes that reflect an importance around identifying primarily as American, and less around identifying primarily as Black. It may be these attitudes that reinforce these participants' belief in misinformation around Blackness and what it means to be Black.

Additionally, a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with cluster group as the independent variable, and CRIS subscales as the dependent variable. Significant differences were found between each of the cluster groups and the CRIS subscales, revealing that each cluster group is meaningfully different with respect to the racial identity attitudes measured on the CRIS: $F(30, 834) = 38.996, p \leq .05, \eta^2 = .50$.

Differential associations between racial identity attitude cluster patterns and sociopolitical outcomes. To answer research question two - *Do differential associations exist between racial identity attitude patterns and sociopolitical outcomes, specifically strategies used to address racism and promote social action?* – two separate MANOVAs were conducted, one with strategies for reducing racism as the dependent variable, and one with general activist orientation as the dependent variable; for both analyses, cluster group served as the independent variable. Although there was no significant difference in the relation between strategies for reducing racism or engagement in high-risk activism and cluster group assignment, meaningful differences were found between the six cluster groups and the conventional activism subscale on the AOS: $F(10, 424) = 1.946, p \leq .05, \eta^2 = .04$. Follow-up comparisons suggest that individuals in Cluster 1 (*Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement*) reported a higher degree of likelihood to engage in conventional activist behaviors (e.g., putting up a poster or bumper sticker,

attending a political talk) compared to students in Cluster 6 (*Low-Salience and Unaware*) , who reported the lowest degree of likelihood to engage in conventional activist behaviors.

These findings provide support for associations previously identified in the research literature, suggesting a link between racial identity attitude and sociopolitical engagement (Lott, 2008; Szymanski and Lewis, 2013; Watts, 1992). In keeping with the mixed methods purpose of complementarity, the results from these analyses were used to inform qualitative data collection and analysis for the second part of the study. The aim for the qualitative study was to provide a deeper and more complex understanding of these quantitative findings, by exploring the real-life experiences around racial identity and conventional social activism. Findings from previous research demonstrated support for the relation between internalized racial identity attitudes and greater endorsement of engagement in social activism. Therefore, to maintain consistency with the literature, interviewing efforts were initially focused on the *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* cluster group, given that quantitative analyses reported a higher degree of likelihood to engage in sociopolitical behaviors.

CHAPTER 4: QUALITATIVE STUDY

Qualitative Study Method

The purpose of the qualitative phase of this research study was to complicate the quantitative findings that have been identified to date around racial identity attitudes and their relation to psychological outcomes, and particularly those outcomes that reflect engagement in sociopolitical activism. As there was variability in the relation between racial identity attitude clusters and conventional activism (as a sociopolitical outcome), I purposefully selected students from one of the two aforementioned clusters. Specifically, I decided to conduct interviews with individuals who reported a stronger, positive internalization of their race and a higher degree of likelihood to engage in conventional activism. I believed that obtaining narrative information from these students on their lived experiences around these issues would inform similar quantitative findings from the extant literature (Watts, 1992). It was my hope that conducting interviews with these individuals would yield meaningful information about the role of sociopolitical engagement in the lives of Black students.

Researcher-as-Instrument. Consistent with the recommendations of Morrow (2005), which advise researchers engaging in qualitative inquiry to share information about their experiences, perspectives, and relationship to the research project, I will briefly discuss some of the ways in which I see myself situated within this study as a researcher. I am a Black (Jamaican-American), heterosexual-identified, middle class woman and an advanced doctoral student in Counseling Psychology. My research interests include Black racial identity, positive psychology and psychological well-being, as well as examining the roles that multicultural counseling competency and social justice work play in training and education. Throughout my doctoral training I have experienced my own kind of sociopolitical development through

conversations with classmates and close friends engaged in activism, by taking courses on multicultural counseling, Black Liberation Psychology, and ethnographic research, and also in the provision of outreach services to students of African descent at colleges and universities. Additionally, my approach to and engagement with research as a counseling psychology doctoral student in a scientist-practitioner training program has been informed and supported by my dissertation research chair and academic advisor, who is a Black woman and a professor of Counseling Psychology and African American Studies at a large, Midwestern public university.

This research study is influenced and guided by my own mental model as a social scientist – namely what Greene (2007) refers to as the “set of assumptions, understandings, predispositions, and values and beliefs with which all social inquirers approach their work” (p. 12). These include the substantive theory and relevant research that informs my conceptualization of the project (i.e., Cross’ expanded Theory of Nigrescence), as well as my scholarly perspective as a doctoral student in counseling psychology, whose academic knowledge is supplemented by coursework in Black psychology and African American studies (as a multidisciplinary field). My mental model is also informed by my applied research training in quantitative methodological approaches (e.g., survey-based research); my experience with qualitative methodologies (e.g., focus group interviewing, semi-structured individual interviews, and ethnographic research); and my exposure to mixed methods inquiry as a research practice that strives to present viewpoints and perspectives that are more complex than those found by conducting research using a singular method.

More recently, my mental model has been informed by my training as an Intern and a Psychology Fellow working full-time in a university counseling center at a large, western public university with a strong history of social justice engagement and political activism. There, a

significant portion of my work responsibilities involves engaging in outreach to and building community with Black college students, as well as other marginalized and diverse student communities. Finally, my work is guided by my own political and personal values, including my awareness of race, racial identity, racism, and my commitment to being a social justice advocate.

Qualitative Study Participants. For the qualitative phase of the study, Black students who participated in the quantitative phase and who indicated an interest in being contacted for a follow-up discussion about the issues addressed in the survey were eligible to participate in the qualitative phase. Consistent with the integrated, sequential, exploratory mixed methods design of the study, 21 students from the larger, nationwide sample of 219 Black college students enrolled in the study were contacted to participate in the follow-up discussion, and five students volunteered to participate in interviews with the researcher. These students were selected from the larger sample based on the pattern of their responses on the CRIS, and their corresponding cluster group membership (*Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement*; see chapter 3). The cluster group was selected based on findings from the secondary quantitative analyses, which found a statistically significant association between the group's racial identity attitude patterns and engagement in general social activism. Namely, students in this cluster endorsed a strong, positive internalization of their race and reported that they were more likely to participate in conventional forms of social activism (e.g., wear a t-shirt or button with a political message, sign a petition for a political cause), as a means of sociopolitical engagement.

The decisions to conduct interviews with students from one cluster group in an online format, in keeping with the a-paradigmatic stance of the study, were driven by theoretical and practical considerations including findings from previous research studies, the number of available volunteers for follow-up interviews, the time and resources available for interviewing,

and the researcher's place of residence during data collection, which changed from the Midwest to the West Coast over the course of the study.

Participant demographics. Table 2 summarizes demographic information about each of the interview participants. Five students participated in the interview portion of the study. Four out of the five interviewees were women. All students identified racially as Black; ethnically, three students identified as African American, one student identified as Black American, and one student identified as African American and Native American (Cherokee). At the time students completed the demographic questionnaire for the survey, the students ranged in age from 18 to 27. All five of the participants attended large, predominantly White, state universities; two of the universities were in the Midwest, and one was in the South. Four of the students were graduate students (one studying Communications, two studying Counseling Psychology, and one studying General Psychology), and one student was a freshman majoring in Food Sciences, Human Nutrition, and Dietetics. One of the five students reported currently participating in community service activities at the time of completing the survey. Two students grew up in predominantly Black neighborhoods, two students were raised in mixed race neighborhoods, and one student was raised in a predominantly White neighborhood. Two students reported that their family's class background during their childhood was working class, two reported their family's class background was middle class, and one reported that their family's class background was upper middle class.

Qualitative Study Measures and Materials. The interview protocol was organized in accordance with the structures suggested by Krueger (1994), and was modified from a larger interview-based transnational qualitative study on racial identity and racial life narratives; it was refined and

Table 2. Summary of Qualitative Study Participant Demographic Information.

| Participant Pseudonym | Gender | Age | Race/Ethnicity | School (and Year in School) | Major area of Study | Currently Participating in Community Service? | Racial Makeup of Neighborhood During Childhood | Family Class Background During Childhood |
|-----------------------|--------|-----|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Allison | Female | 18 | Black/African American and Native American (Cherokee) | Metropolitan University (Undergrad) | Food Science: Human Nutrition-Dietetics | No | Mixed | Upper Middle Class |
| Brittany | Female | 26 | Black/African American | University of the South (Grad) | Counseling Psychology | No | Mostly White | Working Class |
| Denise | Female | 25 | Black/Black American | Metropolitan University (Grad) | Communications | No | Mixed | Middle Class |
| Malcolm | Male | 27 | Black/African American | University of the South (Grad) | Counseling Psychology | Yes | Mostly Black | Middle Class |
| Sue | Female | 23 | Black/African American | Midwestern University (Grad) | General Psychology | No | Mostly Black | Working Class |

Note. Age and year in school of participant are reflective of when student completed survey for quantitative study.

finalized over the course of three piloting sessions. In the first piloting session, a list of potential questions was compiled by the researcher and her research chair, and feedback on the questions was solicited from the dissertation committee and members of the dissertation chair's race and racism research lab; each of these individuals are familiar with the purpose of the study and semi-structured interviewing methods, race, racism, and/or racial identity. In the second pilot session, a group of African American graduate student colleagues enrolled at the large, Midwestern university consulted with the researcher to provide additional feedback on the list of questions that have been revised from the first pilot session. In the final pilot session, the researcher conducted a practice small group discussion using the synchronous chat function on Skype with a small group that included an advanced Counseling Psychology doctoral student, a professor in Counseling Psychology and African American Studies at a large Midwestern predominantly White university, and a psychologist with expertise in providing therapy to adolescents and young adults of African descent; each of these individuals also has experience conducting research on race and identity with Black adolescents, college students, and adults. At the end of each phase of piloting, the interview protocol was modified based on the feedback of the experts involved. The finalized list of interview questions was determined by the researcher and the research chair.

The final version of the interview protocol included the following questions: (a) When was the first time when you became aware of your race? I am not as interested in the first time you realized you were Black, but rather the first time you understood what being Black meant in this society; (b) What kind of messages did you receive from people around you about what being Black means (For example: From Parents and other family members, Friends, Teachers)?; (c) As you reflect on it now, what does being Black mean to you? Has this

understanding changed over time? If so, how? If not, why; (d) Do you think there are racial issues on campus or in your community that you would like see changed? (e) Are there things you have done to address the racial issues you talked about? (f) If you witnessed a racial injustice, what would you do to address it?

Qualitative Study Procedures. After the quantitative analyses were completed, the researcher sent individual email invitations to those students in the group that indicated an interest in participating in a follow-up discussion. The message included a proposed date and time for the interview, and instructions that the interview would take place online in a synchronous text-based format. The researcher asked each student to verify: (a) if they were still interested in participating in an interview, (b) if they were available at the designated date and time, and (c) if they had access to a computer, internet connection, and a Skype account at that time. Twenty-one out of the 40 students (approximately 53%) in the cluster group indicated an initial interest in participating in an interview, and 13 students responded indicating an interest; however, due to scheduling conflicts and lack of further follow-up with some students, five students scheduled and completed interviews with the researcher.

Initially, the researcher proposed conducting a small focus group interview with students who confirmed interest in the follow-up discussion; however, given barriers around arranging times that were mutually convenient for the interviewees, and the failure of one student to present for the first scheduled focus group, the researcher ultimately conducted two interviews with two participants in each interview, and one final interview with one participant whose availability could not be coordinated with the other students due to work and personal commitments. Prior to the interview, the researcher sent an electronic version of the consent form for the online interview to each participant, and asked them to contact her with any

questions or comments regarding their rights as a participant in the study. The researcher also asked students to re-send a copy of the consent form with their contact information included, as a means of “electronically signing” the consent. Verbal consent to participate in the online discussion was also incorporated into the interviews.

All interviews were conducted online using a synchronous chat platform (i.e., instant messaging) that was embedded as part of Skype© or Gmail©. Students were given the option to create a new user name as a means of further protecting their privacy. Each of the students who participated in the two-person interviews used personal Skype accounts; the student who participated in the individual did not have a Skype account, and modifications were made to use the synchronous chat function and the student’s personal Gmail account. The researcher used her personal Skype and Gmail accounts for all interviews.

For the two-person interview, the researcher logged on to Skype 15 minutes in advance of the scheduled start of the interview to prepare the chat space by assigning a name to the chat room (also known in Skype as the “conversation”), adding the participants to her contact list, and inviting them to the conversation so they would be directed to the chat space accordingly upon login. For the third interview (i.e., the individual interview), conducted using the IM function on Gmail, the researcher prepared for the interview by sending an internal invitation to the student to “chat”, which enabled the two parties to communicate directly in a private IM space. In each of the three interviews, the researcher confirmed that all participants were present and could see all typed messages provided by the researcher and other participants (when appropriate). The researcher also confirmed with each participant that she had received their consent form, and reported that the typed conversations in the chat space would be used as transcripts for the interviews. During the introduction and summary of informed consent portion of the interview,

students were asked to select pseudonyms, and the researcher reminded the participants to acknowledge each other by the pseudonyms during the interview as appropriate; however, she also confirmed that any identifying information (i.e., participants' Skype/Gmail user names, real names, school affiliation, or geographic location) would be replaced appropriately to protect participants' confidentiality.

The organization of the interview and protocol was informed by the structure outlined by Suzuki and her colleagues (2007); however, the protocol was modified to reflect an awareness of practical issues relevant to online interviewing, as outlined in Jowett et al. (2011). The overall format of the interview included: (a) a review of relevant informed consent information (e.g., purpose of the study, risks, benefits, rights to confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the group at any time) as well as a brief introduction about the project; (b) specific questions pertaining to the research questions, and to the associations found in the quantitative phase of the study; (c) a request from participants to add any additional insights or remarks; (d) debriefing information and details on participant confirmation for the interview; and (e) thanks and appreciation to the interviewees for their participation in the focus group.

All interviews were conducted by the researcher, who also offered responses intended to explore participants' responses, and probed for additional information or clarification appropriately; the researcher also encouraged students in the two-person interviews to engage and ask for information and clarification with each others' responses if they felt comfortable doing so. Efforts were made to use similar or "standardized" responses in each focus group, in order to maintain consistency in each interview; however, as consistent themes emerged across interviews, the researcher checked in with participants regarding their responses, to explore convergence and divergence of information accordingly (Morrow, 2005; Suzuki et al., 2007, p.

311). As compensation for participation in the interviews, students were provided a \$15 VISA virtual gift card.

At the conclusion of the interviews, the researcher sent an email to the volunteers with a copy of the debriefing and resource list for the study, and instructions on how to obtain and verify their gift card. For two of the participants in the first interview, the researcher also sent the final question from the interview for participants to respond to via email, as one participant had to leave the interview because it ran over the allotted time. The researcher also requested feedback about the online interviewing process, the interview questions, and any general reflections about the study at that time. Participants also informally provided reactions to the interview and study throughout the online interviews.

After each interview, the researcher briefly reviewed each conversation and typed up her own notes and reflections on the interview and the online interviewing process, responding to the following questions: (a) What were the key points discussed? (b) Did any themes emerge? (c) What were my emotional reactions to hearing the stories? and (d) How was the online chat format in conducting the interviews? Each interview transcript was downloaded and saved to password-protected Word documents, cleaned, and reviewed for accuracy and clarity of typed responses; identifying information was removed and pseudonyms were inserted into the transcript.

Qualitative Analysis Procedure. In keeping with the mixed method purpose of complementarity and the exploratory nature of the semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data from this phase of the study. Thematic analysis, which is similar to other forms of thematic coding in its approach to “identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data”, is seen as one of the more flexible forms of qualitative analysis

(Braun &Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Given the a-paradigmatic stance with which I approached the project, I was drawn to this type of analysis because of its flexibility and applicability to a range of different paradigmatic (and a-paradigmatic) traditions.

Upon completion of each online interview, the researcher uploaded and saved a copy of the transcript from the conversation or “chat” in a Word document. All identifying information was removed and replaced with participants’ names and screen names in the transcript with their chosen pseudonym; in certain circumstances where the participant shared other potential identifying information (e.g., the name of their school, or in one case, the name of the president of their university), that information was removed or replaced in the transcript accordingly. The transcripts were then reviewed for accuracy. Initially, I intended to run a “spell check” on each transcript as part of this process; however, as Jowett and colleagues (2011) acknowledge, “online communication does . . . have its own form of paralanguage” (p. 360). Therefore, in order to maintain consistency and integrity among participants’ responses and reflect their true voices, the transcripts were not corrected for spelling or grammatical errors.

Using a six-step procedure outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), a thematic analysis of each interview transcript was conducted. In the first step, (1) I familiarized myself with the data, partly through the data cleaning process and afterwards by reading and re-reading the transcripts, and writing my initial ideas about themes and codes on each transcript. I then began (2) generating initial codes for the data, and separating larger segments of the data into the initial coding categories. Next, I (3) began identifying potential themes from within the coding categories. In certain cases, where it appeared that there may be some overlap in the codes, I considered whether and how certain codes could be merged or combined into larger thematic categories. In this step, I also looked for areas of convergence and divergence among initial

themes. I then moved on to (4) reviewing the themes and creating maps of the thematic categories and sub-categories, and began in this phase to consider on a simplistic level how they would fit with the quantitative data during the mixed methods analyses. Next, I (5) defined and named each of the themes and sub-themes and refined each of these categorizations as needed. Finally, as part of the process of (6) producing the report, I conducted the final mixed methods analyses, looking for convergence and divergence with the quantitative findings, and reconnecting all findings with my initial research questions.

Quality and trustworthiness. Trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry provides a way to establish confidence in authenticity of the scholarly work produced. As a means of undertaking this endeavor, Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify four criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. A number of steps were taken throughout the qualitative analysis process to address trustworthiness (Morrow, 2005; Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). To address credibility, as a means of ensuring that plausible results were produced, I engaged in participant checks after each interview by emailing students individually and asking for feedback about the questions and the online interviewing experience. I also consulted with another advanced doctoral student with expertise in this area for the purposes of peer debriefing and exploration of any biases I had around global themes associated with the research. We discussed my reflections and impressions as well as my biases and assumptions about the findings. Prior to each interview and during the data analysis process, engaging in the debriefing process would allow me to “bracket” my biases and assumptions (Morrow, p. 254).

Providing information in this text about my position as Researcher-as-Instrument allowed me to engage in the process of transferability, which refers to the degree to which sufficient

information about the research context, participants, and circumstances involved with the research (Morrow, 2005). To address this criterion, I also provided detailed information about the circumstances under which the research was undertaken, and demographic information about each of the participants in the interviews (see Table 2). Finally, I took a number of steps to address both the criteria of dependability, which addresses the consistency of the data collection and analysis throughout the research process, and confirmability, which focuses on integrity throughout the research process. To attend to these latter criteria, I carried out the steps for recruitment and data collection using a systematic process involving a checklist that enabled me to follow a series of steps when completing each interview. After each interview, I wrote self-reflective notes directly afterwards, and sent the de-identified transcripts to my research chair as a form of external auditing. In a follow-up meeting, we would discuss our initial thoughts on the ways that the students' narratives converged and diverged from the theoretical interpretations associated with the quantitative results. Although Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that an ideal external auditor is someone who does not have a vested interest in the research, Morrow (2005) acknowledges that auditing can be carried out by a peer reviewer, advisor, or colleague.

Qualitative Study Results

To address the third research question – *What is the nature of the relation between racial identity attitudes and the strategies that Black college students use to address racism and promote social action?* – thematic analysis was used. In this analysis, themes and ideas are identified to capture some of the complexities in participants' responses across the entire qualitative data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Each of the themes and sub-themes identified in this section are accompanied by illustrative quotations, and students are connected to their responses

using their selected pseudonyms. A thematic map identifying the themes and subthemes for the qualitative study is presented in Figure 5.

Environment and early awareness of race and injustice. Participants' responses in this thematic category revealed a number of themes addressing the importance of neighborhood and family racial socialization influences, and how it affected their own awareness of Blackness and racial oppression or injustice. Two sub-themes emerged from this category: *family messages*, *buffering*, and *intersectionalities*.

Family messages. Family messages reflected students' awareness of messages that they received from early childhood through college. The majority of students stressed the strong influence that information from family members had on their own racial identities. Participants' reported that these messages took on one of three forms: racial pride, "othering" (a term coined by two students to capture an awareness that family members saw themselves as different, and more acceptable compared to other Black people in their communities), and differential expectations based on race. For example, Allison noted her parents laid an early foundation when it came to developing an awareness of her Blackness:

I have very race-conscious parents . . . who made sure to teach us [her and her siblings] about our culture and expose us to the Black community (through where we went to church, babysitters, after school programs) . . . my family that i have grown up with closely includes my dads best friends, who are definitely what i call uncles. all of these men are very wise, most of them deans and professors here [at Metropolitan University] in the college of education. so my childhood has been spent around these men and their historical conversations and they are sure to spread knowledge.



Figure 5. Final Thematic Map for Qualitative Data Analyses (adapted from Braun & Clarke, 2010).

Other students shared that their families encouraged their curiosity around race by teaching them about the connections between their race and the history of injustice. Denise indicated that “as a young kid I was really fascinated by stories about slavery and read a lot about it...i think that (along with the teaching and influences of my family) made me aware of my connection to that history and its part of the american story”.

The participants also indicated that there were differences in the kinds of messages they received from certain family members. Some students indicated that family members conveyed “othering” messages, by implying that students and their family members were or should be different from what one student referred to as “those other Negroes” (Malcolm). Malcolm elaborated:

I can also remember my mother driving through the predominately Black urban areas in Louisville, KY and locking the doors when we saw Black men walking by on the streets. We were trained to be different from what I now call ‘those other Negroes.’ My mother, in particular, never wanted us to use bad grammar, talk loudly, or do anything that may make others lump us in with the other Black people. I surmised that Blacks must not be too great even though I never had a problem with being Black. I just internalized that ‘I wasn't like the others’ . . . I perceived it as we were "special Negroes" whose good behavior and nice dress could change the hearts and minds of biased White Americans. Although we never denied our Blackness, we seemed to possess a special sort of Blackness that could potentially make us acceptable in the eyes of our White peers.

Malcolm is clear in sharing that although he never questioned or denied his Blackness, this early message did have an impact on his racial identity, in the sense that he “internalized” being different or distinct from other members of his racial group based on stereotypical information about Black people.

Other students who were interviewed from this cluster shared similar stories, and a few distinguished that there were differences in who conveyed messages of “othering”; specifically one student clarified that these messages were often conveyed to her by extended family, such as aunts and grandparents, and tended to be negative in nature. One of these students, Brittany,

shared that although she received these messages from her grandmother and aunt, her mother also provided her with information around race in different ways. Brittany clarified that “my mom definitely passed down general ideas about how blacks act differently from whites. She frequently made comments like ‘you know how white people are’ or ‘that’s not something black people do’ implying that there are specific actions that are attributed to certain races”.

Only Sue indicated that she did not receive many messages about race from her family growing up, and expressed awareness that there were very few direct conversations around this issue, despite the fact that she was exposed in indirect ways to history and information about contemporary issues affecting the African American community:

I remember the first time I learned about slavery was through a video in elementary school. My parents [and] family never talked to [us] about racial disparities. Besides the video my teachers never talked to us about that. At least not that I can remember. I never had an incident growing up where my parents needed to sit me down and explain to me what it meant. Even though the neighborhood and schools I went to [were] mostly black . . . I knew about the history. I saw movies and television shows about DWB [Driving While Black] (Sue).

Buffering. In addition to illustrating the influence of family messages on racial identity and awareness of injustices for each of these students, the previous quote also illuminates another sub-theme identified in the interviews: the influence of buffering on students’ awareness of Blackness, inequalities, and injustice. Buffering, for the purposes of this study, can be understood as being unexposed or underexposed, kept separate, or protected from societal expectations of Blackness or racial injustice. Sue, who was raised in a neighborhood that was initially predominantly White and changed over the course of a few years to become predominantly Black, shared that she received relatively little explicit information about her race during childhood and adolescence. Sue mentioned that her predominantly Black schools and neighborhood served as a buffer that protected her from exploring the salience of her race, and

from experiencing racial injustices firsthand. Sue goes on to share that it was not until arriving at her university, Midwestern University (a predominantly White state school) that she became aware of “what it meant to be Black”:

Well growing up I went to all black schools. So I never encountered things that made me stand apart from someone else. To be honest I didn't understand what it meant to be black until much older in college . . . I learned more about our history. I also noticed society more. As a kid I didn't have to. It was like I was in a bubble.

Another student, Allison, shared that her neighborhood played an important role in shaping a multicultural perspective, and of connecting with people from different racial or ethnic backgrounds. Allison acknowledged, “my family was very conscious and those adults around me would have intellectual conversations about all sort of race related topics . . . [however,] my experience growing up with different cultures [was one] where we did not . . . use race as a medium”. Allison’s experiences, as someone growing up in a suburb of a major metropolitan city that she referred to as “a utopia”, gave her a sense of balance with respect to understanding and appreciating her race as well as other cultural experiences.

Intersectionality. A third sub-theme identified among the students interviewed from the *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* cluster, related to students’ awareness of intersecting multiple identities, and the role they played in cultivating students’ understanding of their race, and various forms of oppression (e.g., racial, gender-based, and socioeconomic). Each of the students whose comments fit within this sub-theme were aware that, in their earlier years, they did not have a name for the experience of intersectionality when it came to their racial identities or their awareness of injustices growing up. Denise’s comments provide one example of her awareness of the intersection of race and class on her own identity formation:

I had friends from different racial backgrounds and we sometimes looked at those connections as being really harmonious and a sign of utopian like progress . . . however, it wasn’t until I got into college that I also started to look at how my experience was

limited by class as well. most of my connections were with people from the same class as me, and race + class makes for different intersections and conflicts that I did not experience personally.

Other students discussed the role that intersectionality played, primarily with respect to their racial socialization experiences, and less with respect to their understanding of sociopolitical factors that contribute to disparities in U.S. culture. Malcolm acknowledged that there was convergence between this and another subtheme (family messages). He explained, “Although we didn't have a lot of money growing up, I think my parents raised us to think like we were middle-class Blacks. I wasn't super cognizant of class issues at that time, but I didn't think of myself as poor or working class. There were negative messages about poor and working class Blacks that I never felt applied to me or my family”. Malcolm also discussed the influence of his gender on his awareness of Blackness as it related to one of his first experiences understanding what it meant to be Black in U.S. society:

I attended a private, Christian school since third grade. Our school was predominately Black, but the other Christian schools in our area were predominately White. Each year in the spring, we attended a convention with all these mostly White schools. I heard my brothers talking about their experiences (some negative, some positive) with the White convention attendees and quickly discerned that some of the White people there didn't like us because we were Black. Some of them acted afraid of us or were extremely uncomfortable with us being around. Vicariously through these encounters, I learned that being Black was often perceived as a negative thing, particularly being a Black male in our society . . . However, my experiences with the convention really drove the point home for me.

Each of these experiences illustrates that race, for many of these participants, does not exist in a vacuum when it comes to identity; a number of participants cited significant events related to cultivating a sense of their Blackness or an awareness of societal issues where multiple identities were salient. Examples of this phenomenon were also present in the next thematic category, although they did not emerge as clearly as they did in the current category.

Defining Blackness. The second thematic category, defining Blackness, explored participants' present day understanding of and views about their race. For some students, these views and definitions shifted based on important developmental milestones or experiences that increased their self-awareness around this (as well as other) aspects of their identity. Three sub-themes emerged: *Blackness as experiential*, *Blackness as limited*, and *Blackness as complex*.

Blackness as experiential. Each of the five students interviewed for this study struggled to answer the question "what does being Black mean to you?" Many of the participants indicated, during their attempts to answer the question, that it was a challenge to sum up or capture a concrete way that they defined Blackness. Brittany, after contemplating her answer, responded that, "being Black could not be simply defined by behaviors and background . . . it was more about an experience in society". She went on to add, "I also think about it as feeling connected to other Blacks. For me, I think about being Black as an experience as opposed to a particular action." Each of the students, in their response to this question, acknowledged that there was not a concrete set of actions that unequivocally illustrated what it meant to be Black. Instead, students suggested that it was an amalgamation of experiences that connected a race of people within a society (namely, U.S. society).

Denise discussed the importance of connectedness in her understanding of Blackness: "i think that to 'Be Black' is to embody lots of different things from your own experiences to the ones that you observe around you. It is a reminder of histories and also an attempt at solidarity." Denise, Malcolm, and Brittany also each alluded to an awareness of oppression, inequality, or social injustice in their definitions of what it means for them to be Black. Here, Malcolm shared his perspective:

I've found that being Black means something completely different than how most folks perceive it. I see being Black as being aware of issues confronting various Black

communities and working to address them; appreciating what our ancestors have gone through to allow us the opportunities we have today; and understanding our responsibility to carry their legacy forward.

Blackness as complex. Each of the interviewees also agreed that Blackness could not be defined in a simplistic or one-dimensional way, but that it is complex and fluid. One way in which students identified Blackness as complex was in their discussion of the intersection of identities. Denise explained, “maybe there has been some change over time in my expanding what Black can and should mean. In some senses I think that it doesn't have to mean much because of so many other intersections, but I also know that it is something specific and significant to me, because I still consider race to be a very salient identity”. In her response, Denise appeared to grapple with understanding her other identities in the context of her Blackness, and ultimately concluded that her own definition of Blackness incorporated an awareness of each of those identities in addition to a salient racial identity.

Sue, who talked about the importance of staying “true to [herself] no matter what”, also discussed the importance of recognizing multiple identities, and particularly the intersection between race and gender. She states, “Honestly, the only thing I pair together is being a black [woman]. Not that I would want to but those are the two things I can't hide and they go hand and hand. Again not that I do but I can pretend I didn't grow up lower middle class or I could hide my sexual orientation if I wanted. So I view them as different identities. I feel that everything about me and everything I experienced makes me who I am.” Ultimately, each of the students who discussed the sub-theme of Blackness as complex also shared that feeling a positive, internalized sense of who they were as complete and holistic individuals was an important part of understanding their Blackness.

Blackness as limited. Finally, the interviewees also indicated that at some point in their lives, they felt stifled or limited by an awareness of the beliefs or attitudes other Black peers, and U.S. society in general, reflect about what defines Blackness. When asked to share what Blackness means for her, Sue responded:

I think race came from the need for people to group themselves . . . I feel that once you can be aware and respect those differences things would be fine. Since race is such a big deal in this society and the negative stereotypes that blacks hold[,] it shaped what [it] means for me to be black. I am certainly proud of my race. I feel like I have to work harder to get where I want to be in life. Work harder to shed the negative stereotypes. When it comes down to it I can't nor do I want to hide the color of my skin.

Sue's response reflected that her racial identity is salient, and indicated that she feels a strong sense of pride in and connection to her Blackness; however, it appears that she balances this with an awareness of the negative stereotypes associated with being Black. The fact that society assigns certain negative meanings to her race is something by which Sue feels limited.

Allison also shared that when first coming to college, she felt compelled to align herself with the Black community specifically in order to feel connected, whereas she had not had to make that choice in coming from a highly integrated neighborhood:

when i got to college i saw that i would have to really make a choice to get involved and be in the african american community (wasnt as prominent of a decision before, because [my neighborhood was] so integrated) so being in college has definitely increased my awareneess and my need to help build up the community as statistically we are at a disadvantage. i have learned and continue to learn [to accept] the historical context behind "being black" (especially from those uncles of mine <3[includes emoticon of a heart])

Similar to Allison, other students reported they developed a clearer sense of awareness around their Blackness once they came to college. For some, that awareness was heightened by transitioning from a predominantly Black learning environment to a predominantly White institution, and feeling isolated or forced to choose to align themselves with the African American student community in order to provide credibility for their Blackness. Brittany, who

attended a Historically Black College, shared that before going to college she felt limited in exploring her own Blackness because of the influence of friends. Brittany explained:

Well peers certainly had opinions about how you should talk, act, eat, study, breathe, do everything as a black person, lol. I probably sound a bit bitter right now, lol. But I got so tired of hearing the 'you talk white' 'you're in the classes with the smart white people' etc in high school. No one ever directly said 'you act white' but it was implied . . . I think I've always realized that people were closed-minded trying to classify what it means to be Black, but it wasn't something I internalized until college. I sometimes gave into peer pressure during grade school to act a certain way to show my "blackness" but I got over that in college when I saw first hand the various backgrounds of all the Black students at [HBCU].

Brittany shared that attending a college that exposed her to a range of Black individuals was instrumental for her in feeling less limited by peer-identified definitions of Blackness. It was at this point that she was able to explore and internalize her own authentic sense of racial identity.

Means to dismantling institutional oppression. When asked what racial issues they wanted to see addressed on their campuses or in their communities, all five of the students overwhelmingly agreed that they wanted to see an end to institutional injustices and oppression, in various forms. This thematic category was unique in that all students discussed themes around how they have acted or reflected on dismantling systems that render Black individuals isolated, invisible, and powerless. Brittany summed up many of the feelings of the interviewees in her explanation of institutional oppression:

I feel the most frustrated by institutional discrimination. Black people have such a hard time getting by just based on the color of their skin and it really infuriates me. I just re-watched Troubled Water ["Trouble the Waters"] last night (documentary about Hurricane Katrina), so I could be 'in my feelings' right now. But I think the institutional discrimination is something salient to the Black experience . . . it makes people feel powerless, especially those who may also be oppressed due to class. It makes you feel like no matter what you do, you won't get ahead. I think this contributes to a lot of the social ills in the Black community. And it is salient because all Black people deal with it at some point - whether they realize it or not!

There was, however, a range of responses from students about how they addressed institutional barriers on their campuses or in their communities, ranging from reflection and lack of action to proactive confrontation of those who retain power in their institutions. Three sub-themes emerged in this category: *Academic/Professional Activism*, *Personal/Interpersonal Resistance*, and *Reflection with Inaction*.

Academic/Professional activism. A number of students shared that they used their academic or professional work as a platform for building awareness and challenging oppression; a common thread for this sub-theme was that all three of the graduate students indicated that they tend to address the issue of dismantling institutional barriers in this way. Denise, who is pursuing a graduate degree in Communications, explained, “The biggest thing might be that I intend to use my academic studies as a way to improve relations along racial (and other identity) boundaries. I think that perceptions and portrayals of race should be challenged and complicated in order to help alleviate race related problems.” Earlier in the interview Denise also acknowledged the influence of media representations of Black women on the lived experiences of Black women in the U.S. She briefly touched on how it resonated with her understanding of Blackness, and how it challenges representations and internalization of a positive Black woman identity; however, she did not elaborate on how this reflection translates into action against this form of oppression.

Brittany, a graduate student in Counseling Psychology, shared that “I think my actions fall under two categories...but I'm not sure how to classify them. I do things, like mentoring & teaching, to empower/educate others. I also address this issue in the way I approach my research and counseling. This summer I taught a class to high school students about race and racism. When counseling, I encourage critical discussion about discrimination and oppression.”

Brittany's actions illustrate many of the interventions discussed in the research literature on sociopolitical engagement and social activism. Like Denise, Brittany acknowledged that she uses her research to educate and inform those in power, as well as to empower marginalized individuals to work to dismantle institutional barriers.

In his responses, Malcolm also shared that he uses research and teaching to “affect change”. Additionally, he discussed the use of social media as a form of consciousness-raising around various social issues:

I'm what I've heard termed a 'social media activist.' If you look at my social media presence, you will see articles on the various topics I previously mentioned posted there. Apparently, I don't use my social media outlets in the "proper" manner, but I find it offers me an opportunity to share information with others that may not ever think about these issues. Sometimes, I have some strong debates with folks on these issues.

In his response, Malcolm alluded to the ways in which social media activism can facilitate confrontation reactions (i.e., “strong debates”) as well as passive awareness (i.e., opportunity to share information with people indirectly). Malcolm later goes on to admit, “Like Brittany [who had earlier commented on her interpersonal style of advocacy], I don't do many marches. I will, however, participate in panel discussions and attend these discussions. I haven't found that demonstrations fit with my style although I'm not opposed to them”. This additional comment illustrates the importance of broadening the scope of activism to include some of the aforementioned strategies students identified in this sub-theme, including educating through teaching and research and facilitating in-person or online discussions. As these strategies were shared by students themselves, they may have particular relevance for addressing college campus-based injustices.

Personal/interpersonal resistance. All five students shared examples associated with this sub-theme, which in most instances appeared to be the most common means of addressing

institutional oppression within this sample. Sue shared, in response to a question about how she would handle observing an injustice, “Yes, I would try to get to the bottom of it. I personally try not to jump to conclusion. I know things aren’t always as they seem. So I would go and learn more. Then definitely speak out if the situation warranted it.” A number of students provided responses consistent with Sue’s, and indicated that talking with individuals one-on-one about racial injustices felt like a more manageable way to address these issues.

Regarding the challenges around engaging in resistance to racial injustices on an interpersonal level, Allison stated:

If I were to experience racial injustice, I would most likely try to get the person who experienced the prejudice to try and talk to the accuser with me. Together in a calm and civilized manner, I would attempt to bring to attention what was said that was disrespectful or inappropriate and why. I am a firm believer of "people don't know unless you tell them." Hopefully the two of us can shed some light on the topic and obtain an apology.

Allison’s response to this issue reflects her desire to diffuse a potentially highly charged situation by engaging in dialogue with the perpetrator of the injustice and the person who experienced the injustice. Her response also suggests that although she is motivated to educate individuals on a personal level, she is also aware of the potential challenges involved with direct confrontation around these concerns. In her interview, Allison also discussed the importance of mentoring students from racially marginalized communities and working to empower the Black community at “Metropolitan University” as a means to addressing racial oppression at the institutional level. Allison, who is actively involved with the campus African American cultural program, shares that she is “always looking through the eyes of building the community using the house (i.e., the cultural program) . . . it used to be the center of the community and it definitely has lost that”. This comment illustrates the importance of community building and the role of physical space in

empowering marginalized communities. Although this specific concept was not reflected in other students' responses, it is notable in its contribution to reframing the concept of activism.

Reflection with inaction. A smaller number of students interviewed acknowledged that there can sometimes be challenges to addressing injustice, particularly on an institutional level. As Allison pointed out, "We all have those itchy dire moments where we are debating whether to say something or get involved and I will admit sometime I don't speak up when maybe I should (on general issues, not strictly racial injustice)". These interviewees explained that they may often think about acting and indicated recognition that observing an injustice without acting is undesirable; however, there may be other factors that prevent them from intervening (e.g., safety). Denise elaborated on this point:

I'd like to say that I would always address racial injustice when I see it, but that is not (or cannot) always be the case. So I suppose the short answer is that I would try to take action that counters that injustice in some way, but the reality is that there might be circumstances and constraints that limit what kind of response I am able to give. It is difficult to say exactly what that action would look like because I do not know what the case would be at that moment.

This response reflects that although students in this group are aware of and reflect on the importance of addressing a racial injustice, there is also a recognition that it may not be in the student's best interest to act in every circumstance. In other instances, students acknowledged feeling powerless, as only one person, to change the system. Sue, who shared her frustration with feeling isolated as one of few Black students in her classes, indicated that "I would like to see more diversity, but Midwest U is a big school . . . also I really don't know why there is not more diversity. Maybe it's the fact that not a lot of Black people apply to Midwest U, and that's the reason why there isn't a lot of diversity . . . I haven't heard anyone else say anything about it. So because I don't know more about what's going on underneath the surface i haven't done anything to change it".

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The present investigation sought to advance the extant literature on racial identity and sociopolitical engagement by replicating quantitative findings, and extending scholars' understanding of Black students' engagement with social activism. Consistent with the integrated, sequential, exploratory mixed methods design of the study, results from the quantitative phase of data analysis were used to inform purposeful selection of participants for the qualitative phase of the study (Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003). Quantitative analyses yielded a 6-cluster solution that included the following cluster groups: *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement*, *Multiculturalist/Miseducated*, *Assimilated*, *Low-Salience/Unaware*, *Identity in Transition/Immersion*, and *Identity in Transition/Self-Hatred*. Two of the cluster groups, *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* and *Low-Salience/Unaware* were significantly and differentially related to engagement in social activist behaviors. Specifically, individuals in the *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* cluster endorsed a stronger sense of connectedness with their Black identities and a greater degree of engagement in conventional social activist behaviors in comparison to individuals in the *Low-Salience/Unaware* cluster, who reported a lack of connectedness with their Black identities and less engagement in conventional social activist behaviors. Informed by findings from the extant literature that are consistent with these differential associations, initial efforts focused on conducting interviews with individuals in the *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* cluster, in order to obtain a deeper and more meaningful understanding of these students' racial identities and views on engagement with social activism.

For the qualitative phase of the larger study, interviews were conducted online in a synchronous and text-based chat or instant messaging environment. Five students were

interviewed regarding their understanding of what it means to be Black, and their thoughts on social activism, specifically focused on racial injustice. Using thematic analysis, three broad thematic categories, and nine sub-themes emerged: *Environment and early awareness of race and injustice (family messages, buffering, and intersectionality)*, *Defining Blackness (Blackness as Experiential, Blackness as Complex, and Blackness as Limited)*, and *Means to dismantling institutional oppression (Academic/Professional Activism, Personal/Interpersonal Activism, and Reflection with Inaction)*. The latter broad thematic category is most salient to the purpose of the project.

This study contributes to and addresses limitations in the research literature in a number of ways. First, this investigation identified a six-cluster solution that was consistent with the solutions identified in previous studies (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, 2012; Telesford et al., 2013; Whittaker & Neville, 2010; Worrell et al., 2006). As the research replicating existing Nigrescence attitude patterns and identifying new patterns continues to grow, scholars continue to stress the importance of testing the expanded Nigrescence theory, and the viability of cluster analysis as a means of capturing the complexities in racial identity attitudes. Analyses from the current research study support the replication of the *Assimilated* cluster, which has been identified in the aforementioned studies. Additionally, the six cluster solutions identified in this research yielded patterns that were theoretically consistent with Nigrescence thematic categories; namely there were two pre-encounter-oriented clusters and two internalization clusters. Finally, cluster solutions were identified that were consistent with cluster patterns previously found (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver; Whittaker & Neville; Worrell et. al.), but not replicated, in the research literature (i.e., *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement*, *Multiculturalist/Miseducated*, and *Identity in Transition/Self-Hatred*).

Second, this research study provides support for the relation between patterns of racial identity attitudes and sociopolitical engagement outcomes. Previous research has identified a link between racial identity and activism, an association which has existed from a theoretical perspective for over 40 years (Fanon, 1952; Thompson & Alfred, 2008). Findings from the quantitative portion of this study represent a step in the right direction in providing support for an association between racial identity attitudes and social engagement in theoretically meaningful ways.

Finally, this study contributes to the growing body of mixed methods literature around race and race-related issues. Themes identified from the interviews illuminate the ways in which Black students in America engage in social action on an everyday level. The narrative information provided by this study offers additional rich and meaningful information about the quantitative link between internalized racial identity attitudes and conventional forms of social engagement. Through these interviews, students addressed the roles that early life and racial socialization experiences play in their understanding of race, as well as how their present-day thinking about racial identity connects with their varying levels of commitment to addressing racial injustice.

Racial Identity Attitude Clusters

Consistent patterns emerged between the six cluster solutions, and those found in the extant literature (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, 2012; Telesford et al., 2013; Worrell et al., 2006). Furthermore, the clusters identified in this study were theoretically consistent with the themes identified in the expanded Nigrescence theory. Cluster 1, *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement*, is characterized by low scores on all three pre-encounter subscale, and elevations on the immersion-emersion anti-White and multiculturalist subscale; there is a slight elevation on

the Afrocentric subscale as well. Relative to others in the study, individuals' in this cluster group attitudes around race reflect an appreciation for collaboration between Blacks and other cultural groups, in combination with a strong, positive Black identity. Additionally, the pattern of immersion-emersion and internalization subscale scores provide additional support for the endorsement of an internalized Black identity. Previous research suggests that elevations on the immersion-emersion subscale may be evidence of anti-White attitudes; however, the recent discovery of an "Intense Black Involvement" cluster by Chavez-Korell and Vandiver provides support for the presence of intense Black involvement-oriented attitudes, which are not operationally measured on the CRIS. Theoretically, the combination of elevated internalization Afrocentric and multiculturalist inclusive identities suggest that these individual are "deeply immersed in Black culture and all things Black" (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, p. 757). In reality, students' responses reflect an affinity for their Black identity, recognition for other salient and intersecting identities (i.e., gender, class), and an openness to reach out, collaborate, and connect with individuals from other diverse backgrounds.

Cluster 2, *Identity in Transition/Immersion*, is characterized by elevated scores on the immersion-emersion anti-White subscale, slight elevations on the internalization Afrocentric subscale, lower elevations on the pre-encounter miseducation subscale, and low scores on pre-encounter assimilation and internalization multiculturalist inclusive subscales; there is no endorsement of pre-encounter self-hatred attitudes. This cluster is one of two that is similar to a cluster solution identified by Worrell and colleagues (2006), which had not been replicated up to this point. It appears that individuals in this cluster group identify their race as being an important, positive aspect of their identities; however, the presence of miseducated attitudes reveals that they still internalize negative stereotypical information about their race. Despite this,

the negligible self-hatred attitudes suggests that these participants have not internalized negative stereotypes as ones around which they feel shame. This may, instead, present an obstacle for them to fully engage with a positive, internalized sense of their Blackness.

Cluster 3, *Assimilated*, appeared to adopt anti-Black attitudes, as well as some openness to engaging with other diverse groups of individuals. This cluster was the only one in this sample that replicated consistently with other *Assimilated* clusters in the research literature; however, these individuals endorsed relatively low levels of pre-encounter miseducation and self-hatred, and immersion-emersion and Afrocentric attitudes. This may mean that these students reject, on some level, the negative stereotypes and shame that contribute to anti-Black attitudes, and do not apply this information to themselves. They are also clear in the fact that Blackness is not a salient identity for them, and may instead prefer to be considered to be American rather than African American. These participants also revealed some interest in connecting with people from other cultural groups, reflecting an interest in diversity, but not in a way that suggests that race is important to them on a personal level.

Cluster 4, *Multiculturalist/Miseducated*, the largest cluster group, endorsed both high miseducated and multiculturalist attitudes, as well as slight Afrocentric attitudes. In contrast, they endorsed lower scores on pre-encounter assimilation and self-hatred, and immersion-emersion anti-White attitudes. The patterns of scores in this cluster suggest an openness to engaging with individuals from diverse backgrounds, and value placed on race as a salient identity for participants in this group, which are hallmarks of a multiculturalist cluster. The racial identity cluster patterns for this group also reveal that these individuals are balancing a strong internalized sense of Blackness with beliefs around and awareness of negative stereotypes about their race. Therefore, although these students consider race to be a salient identity, they are aware

of the negative information and societal beliefs around Blackness, and what it may mean for their individual identity as well as what they consider to be true about Black people in the U.S.

The cluster analysis patterns for Cluster 5, *Identity in Transition/Self-Hatred*, are similar to Cluster 2 in that they suggest that individuals in this group are experiencing a transition in their attitudes around their race. This group's racial identity patterns reveal high elevations on self-hatred and immersion-emersion subscales, moderately high elevations on the Afrocentric subscale, and slight elevations on pre-encounter assimilation and miseducation subscales; there is little endorsement of multiculturalist attitudes. Telesford and colleagues (2013) found support for a cluster they named "Conflicted", which demonstrated similar elevations on the self-hatred and immersion-emersion subscales as well (p. 90). The authors suggested that their cluster, like individuals in this cluster, appear to be struggling with conflicting beliefs around their race, specifically with respect to managing negative stereotypes and attitudes of self-hatred, with pro-Black attitudes and a belief in the salience of their race. This cluster, however, is distinct from the Conflicted cluster identified by Telesford et al. in that participants endorsed greater miseducation and Afrocentric attitudes over assimilation attitudes. This indicates less connection to anti-Black or pro-American beliefs around their race, but also tension between internalized and miseducated attitudes about being a Black person in America.

Cluster 6, *Low-Salience/Unaware*, endorse pre-encounter assimilationist and miseducation attitudes, compared with a lack of endorsement around all other CRIS attitudes. Based on this pattern of scores, it is apparent that students in this group did not consider race to be salient in their lived experiences, and would prefer to be recognized as American over being recognized as Black. This group also endorsed a belief in and strong awareness of negative

stereotypes about Black people, which may further reinforce their lack of interest in adopting a pro-Black identity.

Relation of Racial Identity Attitude Clusters to Sociopolitical Engagement Outcomes

The findings from this research investigation suggest that there is an association between the cluster groups and engagement with sociopolitical attitudes and behaviors. Specifically, the results indicate that individuals in the *Multiculturalist/Inclusive* cluster reported a higher likelihood to engage in conventional activism, as a sociopolitical outcome. In comparison, individuals in the *Low-Salience/Unaware* cluster reported a lower likelihood to engage in conventional activism. The first finding is consistent with previous studies, which have postulated that greater internalization of a positive racial identity had been previously found to be linked to a higher level of interest in engagement with social action efforts (Watts, 1992; Szymanski & Lewis, 2013). *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* individuals have a more internalized pro-Black identity, coupled with an appreciation for others from diverse cultural groups. It may be that *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* group feels more invested in and engaged with their race and their racial group, and as a result feel more committed to engagement in social and political action on behalf of that group.

Conversely, findings from the present study indicate that individuals in the *Low-Salience/Unaware* cluster reported a lower degree of likelihood to engage in conventional activism. Although these results are somewhat divergent from the results identified by Watts (1992), who found that individuals endorsing pre-encounter attitudes preferred social change strategies that involved partnering with Whites, the findings identified in this study make conceptual sense. Specifically, students in the *Low-Salience/Unaware* group do not place importance on Blackness as a salient identity that they hold, and may even subscribe to beliefs

around negative stereotypes associated with being Black. Therefore, this group is less likely to endorse engagement in conventional activism, particularly if that activism is racially-oriented. Unlike the findings from Watts' study, which suggest that these individuals subscribe to some form of social change strategy, participants in this study appear to be less engaged in the process of social change.

Integration of Results

In keeping with the mixed methods purpose and design of the study, the final phase of the data analyses integrated the quantitative and qualitative data in order to explore convergence and divergence, and to make inferences about the relationships across the total data set. This study employed the mixed methods data analytic strategy of correlation or comparison, where patterns of relationships, themes, and stories emerged and were identified through the data analysis process, in order to contribute to the overall mixed methods purpose of developing a more nuanced picture of those associations that have been previously explored in the research literature using only one method (Greene, 2007). Integrating the quantitative and qualitative findings at this stage provided a richer picture of the study variables and their relation to each other than examining any of the results separately.

Understanding of racial identity. The mixed methods findings for this study provided meaningful information illustrating the ways in which students understood their race as salient aspects of their identity. As reflected in both the quantitative and qualitative findings, each of the five students in the study acknowledged the salience and importance of race in their lives. For certain students, their Black identities were among the more salient of the identities they discussed; however, a number of students discussed the importance of intersecting identities, including gender and class. This is consistent with the theoretical and operational definitions of

one who endorses multiculturalist attitudes on the CRIS. Furthermore, a number of students acknowledged the importance of race and connectedness to Black communities in their interview responses; however these students also discussed the value of growing up in diverse neighborhoods, and acknowledged having friends of different races and ethnicities.

There was some divergence in the ways in which individuals emphasized the salience of race in their lived experiences. For example, one student suggested that she felt stifled by the awareness that people would look at her and only see her race, despite reporting that she feels strongly and positively connected with her Blackness, and has never wanted to be any other race. Two other students in the study also suggested that they felt an “affinity” towards White people during their pre-teen, teenage, and early college years, and questioned having to make a choice to connect with the Black community upon entering college. While this may be limited evidence to call into question the convergence in qualitative and quantitative findings, particularly when considering the bigger picture of all racial identity attitude patterns in the cluster as a whole, the slightly divergent experiences shared by these students do complicate the picture that this cluster paints.

Certain themes that were not accounted for in the quantitative findings emerged as salient themes in the interviews. One topic that was repeatedly discussed by students was the role of intersectionality in their early childhood experiences and present day experiences of the students. A number of students referenced the importance of multiple identities in their understanding of Blackness. Additionally, all of the students discussed the influence of racial socialization messages from family, peers, and neighborhood/environmental influences on their present-day understanding of their race. Future research (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods-

oriented) should examine the role of intersecting identities and racial socialization experiences on the sociopolitical engagement of Black students

Race, conventional activism and resistance. The mixed methods findings also provided meaningful information and illustrations about the association between racial identity and sociopolitical engagement. In fact, this category represented the crux of the “mixing”, in the sense that it directly addresses the aim of the study, which is to understand the circumstances under which individuals in this cluster engage in sociopolitical behaviors. Each of the students interviewed in the study discussed race as a salient identity, and described their Blackness as a relevant aspect of their engagement in social action. Additionally, students reported engaging in some level of conventional activism, and were oriented to discuss this within the context of addressing institutional racial inequalities.

In their interviews, the students discussed strategies for addressing racial injustice that were consistent with those behaviors measured on the AOS conventional activism scale; these actions ultimately emerged as consistent sub-themes in the qualitative data analysis. For example, a number of students discussed the importance of engaging in research, education, and teaching to counteract institutional oppression at their home institutions. One male student specifically indicated that he felt more comfortable serving on a panel or attending a political talk than he does marching in a protest. The AOS conventional activism subscale identifies the strategy “Give a lecture or a talk about a social or political issue”, which is consistent with the aforementioned sub-theme of *Academic/Professional Activism*. The sub-theme *Personal/Interpersonal Resistance* is also illustrated by the AOS item “Confront jokes, statements, or innuendos that oppose a particular group’s cause”, and the sub-theme *Reflection with Inaction* is consistent with the AOS strategy “Go out of your way to collect information on

a social or political issue”. Comparing the sub-themes identified in this study with the items found on the conventional activism subscale of the AOS allows us to observe the ways in which the different forms of data converge to illustrate the consonance between quantitative and qualitative results.

Exploring both qualitative and quantitative forms of data in mixed methods analysis also afforded the chance to engage more deeply with compelling and interesting findings. For example, Brittany, a graduate student at University of the South, summed up her engagement with social activism succinctly: “I’ve never participated in a protest or anything like that, but I feel my advocacy is active, just on a more intimate level . . . and maybe some of that has to do with my personality.” Brittany, as well as other students in the study, mentioned that their engagement in activism is different from what is traditionally viewed as activist behaviors – namely, protesting, picketing, or staging a sit-in. Instead, students suggested in their interviews that their engagement in social activism is more nuanced and may incorporate strategies focused on education, engagement in dialogue, and interventions that occur on an interpersonal level (e.g., writing a letter).

Students also placed emphasis on reflection (i.e., stating that they are aware of injustice but avoiding acting because of consequences/safety concerns) as a kind of action. This calls into question what we identify as sociopolitical behaviors, and whether awareness of injustice alone can be considered a form of action or simply a cognition. These shifts in sociopolitical engagement may be indicative of the changes occurring in American society, particularly with respect to the treatment of race and racism. Namely, students in their interviews suggested that racism has become more covert and less blatant in this so-called post-racial time. This may provide support for the preference among students in this study with race-salient identities to

engage in conventional activist strategies involving attending political talks and collecting written information about social issues, as opposed to engaging in the high-risk forms of social action that we are biased to label as activism. These observations about the data complicate our assumptions and definitions of the constructs examined in this study, and add an additional layer of meaning to the “mix”.

Hearing the voices and discussing the complex and rich experiences of students around the intersections of racial identity and social activism brought to light nuances that are not often identified in the quantitative research literature. In particular, incorporating qualitative inquiry in the form of semi-structured interviews, allows for the researcher to guide the conversation, but also leaves room for flexibility and freedom when it comes to exploring relevant themes or concepts that emerged. Overall, there was meaningful convergence and divergence in the results from the qualitative and quantitative studies, and these findings will extend the research literature by offering scholars a deeper understanding of the constructs examined in this study.

Limitations

Although the present study contributes to the literature in a number of ways, methodological limitations must be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. First, snowball sampling methods were used to recruit students for enrollment in the study. Although these methods yielded a geographically diverse sample, this sampling technique is limited in that it potentially results in a nonrepresentative sample of participants (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). Although there are challenges in identifying African American students for participation in research studies, particularly at predominantly White institutions, future research in this area should address this issue by making a concerted effort to obtain substantially large samples of students across a range of academic environments (i.e., private universities, public universities,

community colleges, PWIs, HBCUs, etc.), in order to examine the generalizability of the quantitative findings identified in this study.

Second, the sample for this research study was comprised completely of students. While there was a considerable range in the ages of the participants (i.e., 18 to 60 years old), the attitudes and beliefs of students at colleges and universities should not be generalized to explain the attitudes and beliefs of Blacks in the United States who are not enrolled in school. Researchers have suggested that there is merit in examining the racial identity attitude patterns of community samples of Blacks in the U.S. Additionally, the vast majority of individuals in this study also identified as African Americans who were born in, or citizens of, the U.S. Future studies should identify CRIS cluster solutions and examine the reliability and validity of the CRIS with individuals who are living in, or who have immigrated from, African diasporic countries outside of the United States.

Due to challenges in the recruitment of participants for the qualitative phase of the study, there were inconsistencies in the structure and type of interviews conducted with participants from the *Multiculturalist/Intense Black Involvement* cluster. Furthermore, challenges involved with using an online interviewing method (although convenient for both researcher and participant), resulted in technical difficulties that affected the length of the interviews and in some instances may have hindered researcher-participant rapport. Finally, due to time and resource constraints, there were no interviews conducted with individuals from the *Low-Salience/Unaware* cluster, the other cluster group whose CRIS patterns were differentially related to sociopolitical engagement. Although the aim of qualitative research is not to produce generalizable results in the same respect as quantitative research, the value of findings that reflect *transferability* (Morrow, 2005), in the sense that this project can inform future research

that support and advances these findings, is an important consideration. Therefore, efforts should be made moving forward to identify qualitative data collection methods that are consistent and suitable for the research.

Implications of Findings and Suggestions for Further Research

The findings from the present study are promising, and point to a number of potential areas for future research and clinical practice. As the number of studies utilizing multivariate analyses (i.e., cluster analysis) to examine racial identity attitudes increases, researchers should continue to utilize these methods to replicate existing cluster patterns, particularly ones that have not replicated as frequently in past studies. Additionally, efforts should be made to identify new racial identity attitude patterns. Researchers now know that because one's attitudes and beliefs about his or her racial group are complex and do not exist in a vacuum, it is more meaningful to use multivariate analyses to understand the pattern of attitudes an individual endorses across all subscales, rather than an individual's specific scores on separate subscales (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, 2012; Vandiver et al., 2002; Whittaker & Neville, 2010). Given the diversity that exists among Black individuals across the diaspora, and within the Black race in the United States, it stands to reason that there is great potential to discover more patterns of racial identity attitudes.

The body of racial identity research postulates that a link exists between immersion-emersion and internalization racial attitudes, and sociopolitical outcomes such as community engagement, affinity towards political organizing, and African American activism (Lott, 2008; Szymanski & Lewis, 2013). Though the results from this project support initial studies' findings in this area, researchers should continue to examine this association and incorporate a wider range of variables, as well as reliable and valid measures, to explore whether a potential relation

exists between racial identity attitudes and other sociopolitical outcomes (e.g., civic engagement, political preference, other measures of critical action). Furthermore, additional mixed methods research should be undertaken using paradigms, stances, and purposes that are consistent with sociopolitical engagement and a liberation-based approach to research (Greene, 2007; Utsey et al., 2001). Additional work in this area will provide more conclusive evidence on the important relation between racial identity and these kinds of outcomes, which can help to provide researchers and practitioners with information to shape further community-oriented work and develop preventative interventions to address mental health issues among people of African descent.

Researchers state that differential patterns in racial identity attitudes also have direct implications for access to counseling and therapeutic work with people of African descent (Franklin-Jackson & Carter, 2007; Thompson & Carter, 1997; Worrell et al., 2006). More recently, Chavez-Korell and Vandiver (2012) suggested that CRIS cluster patterns could be used in clinical settings to provide culturally-informed direct care with Black clients. Results from previous research (i.e., Telesford et al., 2013; Whittaker & Neville, 2010) suggest a link between racial identity attitude clusters and race-related psychological and sociopolitical outcomes, which could further inform clinicians' work with individuals around psychosocial and identity-related concerns.

The experience of Blacks in the United States is one that has been characterized by the challenges of oppression, and the triumphs of empowerment. For generations, resistance against political and social injustices have existed in various forms within the African American community. Although certain forms of activism, such as grass roots organizing and social action facilitated as part of community-based institutions (e.g., faith-based activism) continue to be

prevalent today, many young and emerging adults have begun to use a range of contemporary activist strategies. Disseminating information to address injustice through small-group dialogues, social media, and even by wearing politically-themed clothing, have become effective ways for racially and socially-conscious Black students to dismantle oppression and foster empowerment. As research on racial identity and sociopolitical engagement moves forward, it will be important for scholars to attend to the variations in Black individuals' attitudes about their race and their involvement with social activism, in ways that are consistent with our changing world.

Conclusion

The present investigation contributes to the research literature on Black racial identity by supporting the consistency of racial identity attitude patterns in samples of African American college students, and extending the extant research by finding a relation between these attitude patterns and general activism, as a form of sociopolitical engagement. Furthermore, this study provides narrative information that illustrates students' contemporary understanding of Blackness and the authentic ways in which they engage in social action. Research that continues to provide support for cluster patterns found in previous studies and that identifies new cluster patterns, as well as studies that deepen our understanding of the connections between racial identity and the range of African American activist experiences can help to inform culturally-relevant psychosocial, community-based, and outreach interventions for Black students on college and university campuses. This work also has implications for research and applied work designed to address issues such as internalized racism, race-related stress, and other stressors.

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APPENDIX A: RACIAL IDENTITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

RACIAL IDENTITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

| TASK | COMPLETED (√) |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Send Electronic Invites to Participants for Online Interview Meeting | X |
| 2. Confirm that participants are still interested in voluntary participation; email electronic version of consent form and ask for students to electronically sign form (initial on “signature” line) | X |
| 3. Schedule Online Interview Date/Time for consenting volunteers | X |
| 4. Confirm interview with participants (i.e., reminder call/email); send information about how to access online chat room for interview. | X |
| 5. Confirm with participants that interview will be online using Skype© or Gmail©, and troubleshoot establishing a user account with screen name as pseudonym (if interested) | X |
| 6. Sign online early (at least 20 minutes) and make sure online chat space is available for interview | X |
| 7. Test synchronous instant messaging functioning with other participant(s) | X |
| 8. Confirm that electronic consent forms have been obtained for each participant in focus group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants if they have any questions about the consent information or summary of consent. | X |
| 9. Begin the Interview | X |
| 10. Process the Interview | X |
| 11. Write Brief Reaction Notes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the key points discussed? [be as specific as possible] • Did any themes emerge? • What were my emotional reactions to listening to | X |

| | |
|---|----------|
| <p>the stories?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the online chat format in conducting the interview(s)? • Process reactions with co-facilitator [if one is present] | |
| <p>12. Send emails after the interview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email with resource list • Email to arrange virtual VISA gift card compensation | X |

RACIAL IDENTITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE INTERVIEW INTRODUCTION

Introduction.

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in an online interview as part of a larger project exploring Black racial identity and social justice issues. Your input and insights will be very useful to me as we try to understand what kinds of things help shape how individuals think about race, identity, and certain social issues such as racism and discrimination.

We are interested in understanding the complexities of how we think about our racial identity(ies) and how this understanding might relate to our beliefs and engagement in social issues.

As you already know, I am Valene (screen name: valeneaugusta) and I am a counseling psychology doctoral student in the department of Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Just so you know what to expect, I will first outline the interview process, provide some brief reminders about the consent form, and answer any questions you may have before we actually begin with the conversation. This first part will be a bit of reading, so feel free to interrupt me if you need me to slow down the information I am including. Okay?

Outline of the interview project

The interview will last anywhere between 60 and 90 minutes. During the interview, we will ask you to tell us stories about your experience as a racial being and the meaning you attach to these experiences.

Informed consent

Before we begin, I would like to remind you about your rights as a participant in this study in more detail. At this point, I believe you have a copy of the consent form that you signed electronically and returned to me via email. I'd like to quickly go over the main points in the consent form.

- 1) Participation is completely voluntary – meaning you have the right to not answer questions in the interview if you do not want or you can stop the interview at any time if you choose.
- 2) The text from the instant message chat will be used as the interview transcript – In order to make sure that we are able to accurately capture your perspectives the text from our discussion today in the chat room will be copied to a password-protected word document and used as the transcript for the focus group interview.

The transcript will not have your name on it anywhere; instead I'd like you all now to each pick a name that will serve as your pseudonym or "fake name" that you want us to call you during the interview. When I download the transcript, I will replace everyone's screen names with their pseudonym in the final version. Can each of you go ahead and pick a pseudonym now, please?

Thank you for specifying your names. For everyone in the chat space, please remember to refer in the text to each other using the pseudonym each person picks. After the interview is completed, I will place the copied text into a password protected file. The digital files will be destroyed five years after this project is completed.

- 3) Participation is confidential – several safeguards will be taken to protect your identity. We will not talk about the details of this interview to others.

We cannot guarantee that other participants in the interview will not disclose information outside of this space; however we ask that you respect others' privacy and right to confidentiality and not discuss the content of others' comments outside of this chat room.

- 4) Want more information? –

If you would like to learn more about your rights as a participant in research, feel free to call the IRB office at the University of Illinois. The numbers are provided on the consent form, and you can call collect if you mention you are a research participant. Please let me know if you need me to re-send you a copy of the consent form; I have already confirmed that each of you sent me an electronically signed copy for me to keep for my own records.

- 5) Resource list

At the end of this interview, I will email each of you a copy of the resource list in case you would like to further explore the issues we discuss in these interviews.

- 6) And finally....Token of appreciation

And finally, as a token of my appreciation for your participation in the study, you will receive a \$15 VISA Virtual Gift Card. I will be in contact with you using the email address you specified, unless you contact me to let me know otherwise. At that point, I can make arrangements to have the access codes for the cards emailed to each of you individually, and you will be able to access them online.

Questions. We are ready to begin the interview. Do you have any questions before we start?

RACIAL IDENTITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introduction

So, as I mentioned before, in this discussion I am interested in how people understand what it means to be Black. I expect that people think about this topic in a lot of different ways.

My thought is that there is not one Black experience, or that to be Black you need to look or behave a certain way. Instead, I believe there are multiple ways of being Black and making sense of Blackness. Having this conversation is one way that I can understand and bring light to these complexities in my project.

In addition, I am interested in how you think about racial issues, both on your university campuses and in the communities that you occupy outside of your campus. I also want to know if there are any racial issues you would like to see changed or addressed, and what you would do about changing or addressing them.

In sharing your stories, please know that there are no right or wrong responses; I am not looking for a specific narrative. I am most interested in hearing you talk about how you make sense of the experiences you have had. So, please be true to yourself and to your story.

I also want to acknowledge that having this conversation in a Skype chat room (rather than face to face) may feel a bit awkward at times. Please do your best, and feel free to engage with each other on any points that someone else in the group [say this if the interview is a group interview; remove for individual interviews] might make if it feels relevant to do so.

Any questions or comments?

[Solicit for responses from participant(s) to make sure they understand/don't have any questions].

ONLINE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

When was the first time when you became aware of your race?

I am not as interested in the first time you realized you were Black, but rather the first time you understood what being Black meant in this society.

What kind of messages did you receive from people around you about what being Black means?

For example: From Parents and other family members? Friends? Teachers

As you reflect on it now, what does being Black mean to you? Has this understanding changed over time? If so, how? If not, why?

Do you think there are racial issues on campus or in your community that you would like see changed? Tell me more.

Are there things you have done to address the racial issues you talked about?

(Back-up/Follow-up Question) If you witnessed a racial injustice, what would you do to address it?

Thank you so much for your time and willingness to share your thoughts with me!